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VETERAN ACE ROY HALLADAY SIGNS A ONE-DAY CONTRACT TO RETIRE WITH TORONTO

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Even virtual worlds aren't safe from NSA

Intelligence operations are spying on gamers, say reports

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Just let the woman dance, say supporters

Police told crossing guard to stop, fearing for students' safety near Dufferin and Dundas

PAGE 3

No clear contender for year's top flick

L.A. critics split between Gravity and Her, adding more doubt to an uncertain awards season

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NEWS WORTH SHARING.

Farewell to cop with big heart

Const. John Zivcic's mother Vicky, right, reacts with family members during his memorial service in Toronto on Monday. Zivcic was responding to an emergency call about an impaired driver on Nov. 30 when his police cruiser collided with another vehicle. MARK BLINCH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Funeral. Const. John Zivcic is remembered for his acts of kindness and generosity at a packed service

As their son and brother clung to life in hospital, Const. John Zivcic's family learned just how important his service had been.

After the chief of police, his senior commander and political dignitaries praised the 34-year-old officer's more than six years on the force at a funeral in Etobicoke on Monday, his brother Tom Zivcic told a story few had heard before.

"John was a big guy with a big heart. He performed acts of kindness that were very special. They were even more amazing because he didn't tell anybody about them," Tom began to tell the crowd of more than 7,000 officers, family and friends at Toronto Congress Centre.

As the officer lay in critical condition after a serious on-duty crash that would claim his life on Dec. 2, Zivcic's family huddled on the ninth floor of St. Michael's Hospital. His sister Angie got a voice mail.

"You don't know who I am," the message from a stranger began. "I knew your brother quite well."

The woman who called said she'd met Zivcic a few years ago when he responded to a domestic-abuse call. He left his card with the now-single mother of two and said to call if she needed anything.

"I did many times, as I had nobody else to talk to," the woman said. "He made time to talk to me, or to see me, always."

The last time the officer and the woman spoke, the family dog had just died. Her children were distraught. There was no money for a new pet, she confided in Zivcic.

"One week later, John showed up at my place with a puppy in his arms," Tom read, his own voice cracking in the impossibly silent hall.

Tom told mourners that he had hoped one day to speak at his brother's wedding — repaying the kindness he'd shown speaking at his own ceremony two months ago.

"I guess this has to be my best-man speech to him," he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Lending a hand

There were other random acts of kindness that became part of John Zivcic's reputation.

- He once helped a woman get to the hospital after a serious vehicle collision while he was vacationing in the Caribbean. Upon arriving, Zivcic stayed with the woman and paid for her medical bill.
- The act earned him the chief's commendation in 2009.

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Social media posts

Firefighters dispute firings

Three Toronto firefighters axed in September following a month-long investigation into tweets and other social media posts seen as degrading to women may be back on the job if the union has its way.

The Toronto Professional Fire Fighters' Association said they are awaiting arbitration dates for three members.

The social media posts at issue include a quote from a 1997 episode of South Park: "I'd never let a woman kick my a–. If she tried something, I'd be like HEY! You get your b— a– back in the kitchen and make me some pie!" TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

45 days in jail

Cop convicted of G20 assault sentenced

A Toronto police officer convicted of assaulting a protester during the G20 summit was sentenced Monday to 45 days in jail.

Babak Andalib-Goortani TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Const. Babak Andalib-Goortani was convicted in September of assault with a weapon for using excessive force during the arrest of protester Adam Nobody on June 26, 2010, on the lawn of the Ontario legislature.

Andalib-Goortani was released on bail Monday, pending his appeal of the case. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Dancing crossing guard Kathleen Byers is all smiles Monday as kids rally for her because she was told by police that she could not dance anymore while doing her job at her crossing near Dufferin and Dundas. VINCE TALOTTA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Go forth and dance, Ms. crossing guard

'Let Kathleen dance!'
Parents, kids rally in support of Kathleen Byers, who police told last week not to dance while on the job

More than 100 kids and parents formed a noisy, bouncing show of support for their neighbourhood's dancing crossing guard on Monday.

The lunchtime dance party was called after police last week told Kathleen Byers that her dancing put students' safety at risk as they crossed Dufferin St. south of Dundas St. W., and ordered her to stop. Byers' moves — and her enthusiasm for her job — have made her a beloved figure in the community.

"I'm overwhelmed, and just joyful at all the support," said Byers, whose dancing continued on Monday, though mostly on the sidewalk. "It just shows me that what I'm doing is not wrong."

Students from Gladstone Avenue school and Grove Community School held up signs and chanted "Let Kathleen dance!" as Byers manned the intersection in front of them. One dad with a guitar led the crowd in a round of Footloose, the title track from the Kevin Bacon movie (and 2011 remake) about teenagers rebelling against their small town's ban on dancing. When asked why they like Byers, 8-year-old Grove students Noah Skye and Sam Rankin said in unison, "She's one of a kind."

"She actually likes her job," Sam said.

The Toronto Police Service's traffic department oversees crossing guards in the city. They say Byers' moves sometimes divert her stop sign away from traffic and that her dancing on the sidewalk takes drivers' attention off the road, both of which pose a risk to children and other pedestrians, spokesman Const. Clint Stibbe said.

Since Byers got the cease-and-desist order last Wednesday, members of the community have been calling police to share their dismay and signing an online petition. Grove's young students also started their own petition. If nothing changes, Dylan Horvath, a Grove dad who helped organize Monday's rally, said they will look at a more formal form of complaint. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Working Canadians. New anti-union group on message with PC platform

A new anti-union group has sprung up just as the Progressive Conservatives threaten to make labour issues a key ballot question in the next election.

With Ontarians expected to go to the polls as early as May, Working Canadians wants to raise awareness about the influence of "union bosses" on the province.

Like Working Families, a coalition of unions that successfully ran ads attacking the Conservatives in the 2003, 2007 and 2011 provincial elections, Working Canadians considers itself non-partisan.

"Part of the purpose is to counter the Working Families and that type of organization," spokesperson Catherine Swift, chair of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, said Monday.

Swift stressed the CFIB is not officially part of the new organization, which is run by volunteers and funded by small businesses and Merit Canada, which lobbies for "open shop," or non-union, construction companies.

Radio ads

Working Canadians plans to air radio ads in the months ahead. The group says Working Families and other pro-union groups spent millions in the 2011 election.

"It's not partisan, it's just making sense," she said, noting a decade of hefty contracts to unionized public servants, such as teachers, nurses, and police officers, has helped create a "structural deficit" in Ontario.

"The average taxpayer doesn't have a clue about this," said Swift, expressing concern that Ontario could "go the way of Greece or Detroit" unless spending is reined in.

To that end, she would like to see widespread open tendering of contracts so non-unionized shops could more easily bid on public contracts.

Coincidentally, that's the message the Tories plan to take to voters in the next election.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The PM accepts a Stephen Harper Bobble Head doll given to him by Canadian Federation of Independent Business chair Catherine Swift in this 2011 photo. Swift is the spokesperson for a new anti-union group. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

Three Ontario leaders apologize for Huronia

Orillia asylum. Survivors of centre have waited decades for apology for notorious abuses

Premier Kathleen Wynne made a visit to the public gallery of the legislature on Monday and spoke with Barry Smith, who once lived at the Huronia Regional Centre in Orillia, Ont. Along with Tim Hudak and Andrea Horwath, Wynne officially apologized on behalf of the province for the poor treatment the residents received. RANDY RISLING/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Barry Smith has waited more than 50 years to hear the government apologize for all the cruel punishments inflicted on him at Huronia Regional Centre in the 1960s.

Sent there by his parents in his early teens, Smith still remembers the beatings and forced medication inflicted on residents at the provincial institution.

He and thousands of other survivors of the notorious asylum in Orillia were the focus of a watershed moment in Ontario history on Monday as all three major provincial parties apologized unequivocally for the treatment they endured at the facility.

"I am sorry for what you and your loved ones experienced, and for the pain that you carry to this day," said Premier Kathleen Wynne in front of more than 100 survivors and family members in the Queen's Park legislative chamber. "In the case of Huronia, some residents suffered neglect and abuse within the very system that was meant to provide them care. We broke faith with them — with you — and by doing so, we diminished ourselves."

The province and survivors of Huronia reached a $35-million settlement in a class-action lawsuit earlier this year. The settlement, which specified that the government must apologize, was approved by a Superior Court judge Dec. 3.

Both Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak and NDP Leader Andrea Horwath also offered their apologies — something residents said was important because the Huronia abuses happened under the watch of governments led at various times by the three major parties.

"Our apology can never erase the pain or the tragedy ... but we must remember, let us never forget this day so we never see another Huronia again," said Hudak, choking up as he delivered his speech.

Following the apologies, Wynne approached Hudak and shook his hand.

Quoted

"This is the greatest apology that you could ever get ... I know that they have now acknowledged what we went through and we are now part of the community. We have our dignity and our freedom."

Barry Smith, former Huronia resident
When Smith was about 10, he endured beatings and strange punishments in Huronia, like being forced to watch cows get slaughtered.

The day was a milestone for Marilyn and Jim Dolmage, the litigation guardians of the class-action lawsuit, and Patricia Seth and Marie Slark, the two lead plaintiffs.

"It was wonderful. It needed to be done. Although unfortunately it should have been past premiers to do it, but as long as we're going forward, an apology is excellent," said Seth, a former Huronia resident.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

U.S. denies entry to woman with bipolar disorder

Pearson airport. Info about Canadians who attempt or threaten suicide is shared with FBI and other agencies

Amanda Box says she can't help but compare how she was treated recently by U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents at Pearson airport with how she was treated when she flew to France and England in 2012.

When she flew direct from Toronto with her sister and went through customs in England and France, "I was treated like a person, with dignity and respect," said the 38-year-old Toronto woman who has bipolar and takes medication.

Certainly, no one overseas mentioned any part of her mental-health history, which includes a suicide attempt 20 years ago and suicidal thoughts this spring when she was depressed and having housing problems.

Quoted

"They fingerprinted me and took my photo — I was in tears at that point." Amanda Box

But in mid-September, when she went to Pearson with her American boyfriend, it was a different story. While she was standing in front of a U.S. Customs and Border Protection agent, Box said he looked at his computer screen "and he said something about 'mental-health issues.' Then he said, 'Yeah, you're really crazy.'"

Box said he told her that she wasn't being allowed to enter the U.S. and that she needed more documentation because she was considered a "flight risk. They said I might try and stay," said Box, who felt shocked that someone in that position could be so rude. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Amanda Box was denied access to the U.S. when she tried to cross the border recently. CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Aspiring mayor Soknacki calls for police review

David Soknacki TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

David Soknacki, a self-described longshot candidate for Toronto mayor, began his campaign by casting himself as both a thoughtful consensus-builder and a truth-teller willing to touch "the third rail of municipal politics": The effectiveness of the police force.

Soknacki called Monday for a "strategic review" of the force's operations. Pointing to figures that show Toronto solves a lower percentage of violent crimes than other cities and that Toronto officers handle fewer cases per person, he said he would not be among the politicians who are "too timid" to challenge the police for fear of upsetting its "powerful" union or being called "soft."

"We have great people in the police. The outcomes can be so much better," he told reporters after a "pre-season" breakfast speech to a paying crowd of about 20 people at the Sheraton hotel across from city hall.

Who?

Soknacki is a right-leaning Scarborough businessman and former councillor who served as first-term budget chief to former mayor David Miller, with whom he often disagreed.

"If we want safer streets, and I do, then we need to take a holistic view, measuring progress by what we're getting, not by what we're spending. Yet the very idea that we could even debate these issues has been completely abandoned," he said in his prepared remarks.

"Public safety services take up the highest proportion of our city budget, by far, and yet many fiscal conservatives refuse to even allow for the idea that we could modernize, innovate, reorganize, even measure and make more effective those services."

Police spokesman Mark Pugash declined to address Soknacki's comments.

The election is in October 2014, and the campaign period formally begins Jan. 2. Soknacki will likely struggle for media and public attention once better-known candidates enter the race. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ukrainian chairman of the opposition party Udar and WBC heavyweight boxing champion Vitali Klitschko, surrounded by police, tries to stop possible clashes between police and pro-European Union activists in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Monday. Hundreds of police in full riot gear flooded key sites of mass anti-government protests. EFREM LUKATSKY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police move in on Kyiv protests

Tensions mounting.
Opposition says its offices were raided; police deployed near protesters

Heavily armed riot troops broke into the offices of a top Ukrainian opposition party office in Kyiv and seized its servers Monday, the party said, as anti-government protests crippled the capital for yet another day.

Elsewhere police dismantled or blocked off several small protest tent camps near key national government buildings in the city.

Tensions also rose as a double cordon of helmeted, shield-holding police deployed in the street near Kyiv's city administration building, which demonstrators had occupied and turned into a makeshift command post and dormitory.

The moves came a day after hundreds of thousands of demonstrators crammed into Kyiv, the biggest in three weeks of protests that started when Ukraine's president backed away from signing a long-awaited pact to deepen ties with the European Union.

Protesters are angered not only by the thwarting of their desire to become closer to the West and spin out of Russia's orbit, but by police violence against the demonstrators. Club-swinging police have twice broken up protest rallies.

Ostap Semerak, a member of the Fatherland Party, said that troops broke into the party's offices on Monday evening, some climbing in through its windows.

"They are storming us. The images are insane," he said by telephone.

The troops left after confiscating some computer equipment, he said.

Party member Marina Soroka also said the troops surrounded and blockaded several opposition-minded Ukrainian media outlets, making their and other media websites inaccessible. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MP files complaint against senator's 'misogynistic attack'

A New Democrat MP has formally lodged a complaint against a Conservative senator for what she describes as a condescending, "misogynistic," personal attack against her.

Charmaine Borg has asked the Speaker of the House of Commons to rule that her ability to do her job as an MP was impeded by a letter sent to her last week from Sen. Jean-Guy Dagenais.

In the letter, which was copied to all MPs, senators and their staff, Dagenais characterized Borg as a whiny, ignorant, useless Quebec MP who was elected by fluke and stands little chance of being re-elected.

Dagenais' letter was sent in response to a flyer Borg sent out in her riding advocating the NDP's long-held belief that the Senate should be abolished.

Borg says she was particularly insulted by Dagenais' suggestion that she should get some books from the parliamentary library to inform herself about the Senate before criticizing the institution.

NDP MP Charmaine Borg
SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Borg, who is 23 years old, says that's the kind of "old-school mentality" that discourages young women from entering politics.

"The overall tone of this letter suggests that I am simply a little girl who does not take her work seriously," Borg told the Commons on Monday.

Outside the chamber, Borg called the tone "very misogynistic," and added: "I think if I was an old white man, he wouldn't have attacked me."

The Speaker did not rule immediately on Borg's question of privilege.

In an interview last week, Dagenais said his letter is part of a campaign by some Conservative senators, including Senate Speaker Noel Kinsella, to defend themselves and their institution after taking a year-long drubbing over the Senate expenses scandal.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The red planet

Mars rover finds ancient lake

NASA's Curiosity rover has uncovered signs of an ancient freshwater lake on Mars that may have teemed with tiny organisms for tens of millions of years, far longer than scientists had imagined, new research suggests.

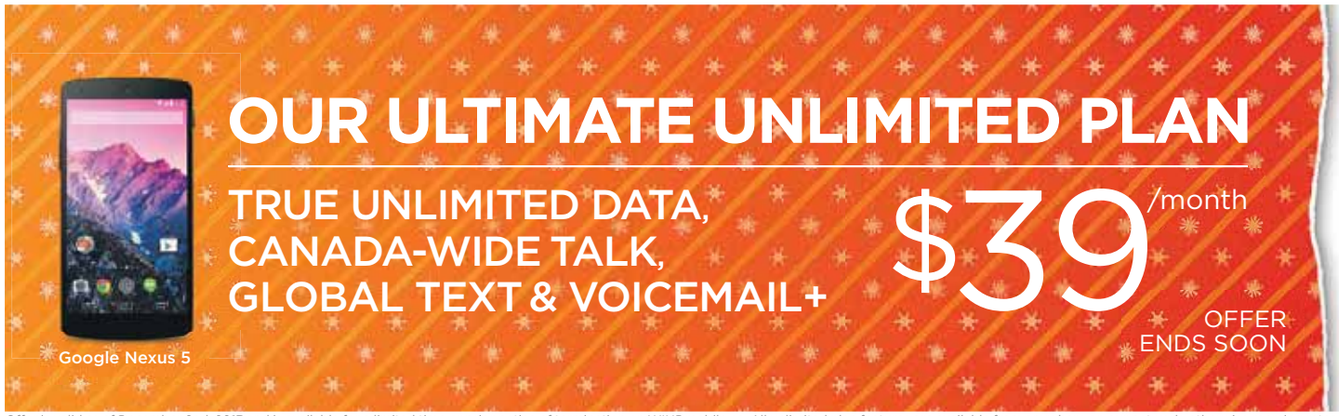
The watering hole near the Martian equator existed about 3.5 billion years ago. Scientists say it was neither salty nor acidic, and contained nutrients — a perfect spot to support microbes.

"This just looks like a pretty darn ordinary Earth-like lake in terms of its chemistry," said project scientist John Grotzinger of the California Institute of Technology. "If you were desperate, you could have a drink of this stuff."

The findings were published online Monday in the journal Science.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A self portrait of the Mars rover, Curiosity.
NASA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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5 killed as train hits fuel truck in Jakarta

Rescuers search for victims in the wreckage of a commuter train that derailed after it collided with a tanker truck hauling gasoline in Indonesia's capital Monday, killing five people and sending a fireball of orange flames and black smoke shooting skyward. The accident in southern Jakarta killed the train engineer, his assistant, a technician and two female passengers. The truck driver and his assistant were among nearly 100 people injured. The fuel-tanker truck was stopped on the rail tracks at a crossing and unable to move forward because of backed-up traffic on the road. TATAN SYUFLANA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mayor behaving badly. San Diego's Filner gets home confinement

Bob Filner was sentenced Monday to three months of home confinement and three years of probation for harassing women while he was mayor of San Diego, completing the fall of the former 10-term congressman who barely a year ago achieved his long dream of being elected leader of America's eighth-largest city.

Filner, 71, who resigned amid widespread allegations of sexual harassment, pleaded guilty in October to one felony and two misdemeanours for placing a woman in a headlock at a fundraiser on March 6, kissing another woman on the lips without permission at a Meet the Mayor event on April 6 and grabbing another woman's buttocks at a May 25 rally to clean up Fiesta Island in Mission Bay. None of the victims have been identified.

The charges do not involve Filner's former communications director, Irene McCormack Jackson, who expedited the mayor's downfall by becoming the first to go public with sexual harassment allegations in July. She has filed a lawsuit against Filner and the city, claiming her boss asked her to work without panties, demanded kisses, told her he wanted to see her naked and dragged her in a headlock while whispering in her ear.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The black list

Nearly 20 women have publicly identified themselves as targets of Filner's unwanted advances, including kissing, groping and requests for dates.

- His accusers include a retired navy rear admiral, a San Diego State University dean and a great-grandmother who volunteers answering senior citizens' questions at city hall.

Houston airport

Sleeping passenger wakes up to dark and empty plane

As the captain of an oil platform supply boat in the Gulf of Mexico, Tom Wagner is no stranger to bumps and other movement while he sleeps. So when he nodded off on a flight from Louisiana to Houston, it was no surprise that the landing bounce didn't wake him.

He awoke to a traveller's nightmare — a dark and locked plane parked at Houston's Bush Intercontinental Airport.

Wagner, 51, said he didn't panic. He picked up his cellphone and called his girlfriend.

She called United Airlines in Lafayette, where Wagner had boarded the United Express flight on Friday, and was told there was "no way" he was stuck on that plane.

However, a couple of maintenance workers coincidentally opened the door and found Wagner.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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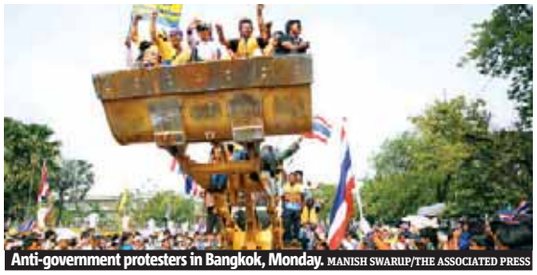
Thailand PM calls elections amid unrest



Anti-government protesters in Bangkok, Monday. MANISH SWARUP/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Political crisis. Yingluck Shinawatra dissolves lower house of Parliament as protesters vow they'll continue fighting to topple her

Desperate to defuse Thailand's deepening political crisis, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra dissolved Parliament's lower house on Monday and called early elections. But protesters seeking to topple her vowed to carry on their fight, saying they cannot win at the polls because of corruption.

A decree from King Bhumibol Adulyadej scheduled the elections on Feb. 2 and named Yingluck as interim prime minister until then. The protesters demanded that she resign as caretaker and rejected the election date, putting the strongly royalist movement at odds with the royal decree.

Protest leader Suthep Thaugsuban, who faces an arrest warrant on insurrection charges, spoke to more than 150,000 followers at a stage outside Yingluck's offices, challenging authorities to "come get me!" THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"We have given the power back to the people to decide and have elections according to the democratic system under the king."

Thailand Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra

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Sunday schedule

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Egypt

Brotherhood leader denies inciting violence

The leader of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood denied his group was to blame for violence as he appeared in court Monday for the first time since being detained after the ouster of the Islamist president last summer.

The trial against Mohammed Badie comes as authorities tighten a crackdown on dissent, arresting dozens of protesters in a raid on Al-Azhar University, Sunni Islam's most prominent educational institution.

Amid tight security Monday, Badie and 14 other senior leaders of the group appeared for the opening of a trial focusing on July protests in which at least five people were killed.

Badie denied the Brotherhood was behind any violence, telling the court, "My group and I are not offenders or defendants. We are victims in the face of those that killed thousands of citizens and peaceful protesters."

Badie said dozens of his group's offices were torched during the protests against ousted Islamist president Mohammed Morsi. "My son was killed, my home was torched and shot at, and despite all that there is not a single investigation into this," he told the court. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ultra-Orthodox Jews protest Israeli military recruitment

An ultra-Orthodox Jewish man climbs a tree near Haifa, Israel, Monday, during a demonstration to support other ultra-Orthodox Jews who were detained for refusing to report to a military recruitment centre. Israeli police say more than a thousand people have protested.

ARIEL SCHALIT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Dealers are free to set individual prices. ¥Offer only valid from December 10, 2013 to January 2, 2014 (the "Program Period") to retail customers resident in Canada who own or are currently leasing a Chevrolet HHR, Equinox, Tracker, Uplander, Venture, Astro, Lumina APV, Blazer, Traverse, Trailblazer; Saturn Vue, Relay, Outlook; Pontiac Montana/SV6, Transport, Torrent, Aztek, Sunrunner; Buick Rendezvous, Terraza, Enclave, Rainier; Oldsmobile Silhouette, Bravada; GMC Safari, Jimmy, Terrain, Acadia or Envoy, that has been registered and insured in Canada in the customer's name for the previous consecutive six months, will receive a $1,000 Holiday Owner Bonus credit towards the lease, purchase or finance of an eligible new 2014 GMC Terrain or Acadia delivered during the program period. Only one (1) credit may be applied per eligible vehicle sale. Offer is transferable to a family member living in the same household (proof of address required). 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Only one (1) credit may be applied per eligible vehicle sale. Offer is transferable to a family member living in the same household (proof of address required). This offer may not be redeemed for cash and may not be combined with certain other consumer incentives available on GM vehicles. The $1,000 credit includes HST/GST/QST/PST as applicable by province. As part of the transaction, dealer will request current vehicle registration and/or insurance to prove ownership. GMCL reserves the right to amend or terminate this offer, in whole or in part, at any time without prior notice. Void where prohibited by law. Additional conditions and limitations apply. See your GM dealer for details. †Comparison based on 2013 Polk segmentation: Compact SUV and latest competitive data available and based on the maximum legroom available. ®Bluetooth is a registered trademark of Bluetooth SIG Inc.

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Cancun Travel Feb 19 - Mar 4/dl	$499
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Los Angeles Travel Jan 27 - Feb 3/dl/ac	$595	$2535
London Travel Jan 19 - Jan 27/ts/fi	$732	$2399
Paris Travel Feb 19 - Mar 5/fi/fi	$859	$2399
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Riviera Maya 7 Nights 4-Star — $1079
Catalonia Yucatan
Departs Jan 2/nol/ts/c6. **UPGRADE** to 4.5-star Blue Bay Grand Esmeralda for $1149.

Punta Cana 7 Nights 4-Star — $1102
Blau Natura Park Beach Eco Resort and Spa
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New York Flights + 3 Nights — $472
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A Christian man chases a suspected Seleka officer with a knife in Bangui, Central African Republic, Monday. Christian and Muslim mobs amplified the violence by going on lynching sprees last week. JEROME DELAY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Angry civilians stage sectarian attacks

Central African Republic. 400 died last week in two days of fighting between Christians and Muslims

Quoted

"After the French leave, things will explode."
Abdel Wahid, Central African Republic resident and Muslim

Dozens of young men stood waiting for storm clouds to pass in Central African Republic's capital. They spotted a man in a flowing white robe traditionally worn by Muslims, hand-in-hand with his adolescent son.

Hungry for revenge, the crowd descended upon the pair. The man's terrified son broke away and fled on foot, abandoning his father as the knife-wielding mob clutched the middle-aged man.

Muslim rebels known as Seleka overthrew the government of this majority Christian nation nine months ago, sparking mounting sectarian violence that prompted former colonizer France last week to deploy troops to Bangui in an effort to stop the bloodshed.

In a city where more than 400 people died last week in two days of tit-for-tat violence between Christians and Muslims, it was clear Monday there is still enough pent-up rage left that a crowd will try to kill a man on sight.

In this case, French forces intervened just in time, firing into the air as a warning. Other Muslims were not as fortunate. In the Benzvi neighbourhood, a mob descended upon two ex-Seleka leaders leaving their home Monday afternoon.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Chompey. Iowa officials seek sanctuary in warm climate for feisty gator

Animal control officials in the Iowa city of Waterloo are seeking a new home for a baby alligator named Chompey.

A resident who had purchased it turned the gator in to animal control officials, who kept the creature in an aquarium while figuring out what to do with it. The alligator was moved to the Pawsitive Pet Care, a veterinary centre, where staff dubbed the animal "Chompey." The alligator then was sent to a herpetologist in Des Moines, where the animal's being held in quarantine while staff seek a sanctuary in a warmer climate for Chompey. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"He was really kind of cute, but he was also kind of naughty."

Maria Tiller, Waterloo's code enforcement forewoman, on temporarily housing Chompey the alligator in her office

When baby alligator Chompey started snapping and making noises after being turned in to animal control in Waterloo, Iowa, officials decided to find a new home for their 'naughty' charge. COURTESY PAWSITIVE PET CARE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hey kids, even Santa has to do his schoolwork

Santa School. Turns out it takes a lot more than a big belly and white beard to truly emulate jolly old Saint Nick

It may seem easy to look the part of Santa Claus with the beard, red suit and belly, but the owner of the Santa School says there's more to stepping into his boots than mimicking his outer appearance.

Jennifer Andrews has welcomed would-be Santas from around the world to her Calgary-based school where instructors offer guidance on the art of becoming St. Nick. They also have professionally trained "Santa regional representatives" who work within North America, Europe and Asia.

"We want them all to be Santa, but they're always their own version of Santa. They're going to bring their own personality and their own backstory," said Andrews, who was recently asked to lead a training crash course for The Magic of Christmas, a Calgary charity.

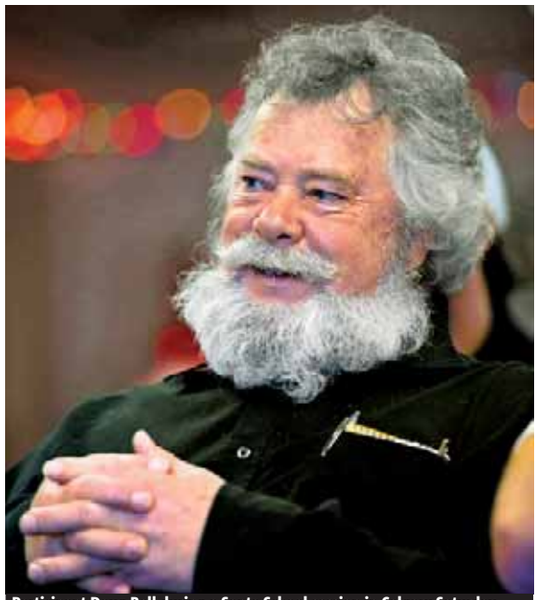
Santa School offers a three-day course for both novices and seasoned Santas.

Santas learn the importance of maintaining a large presence within a room, like crafting their grand entrance and exit. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ho ho ... no?

Then there's the matter of another key Santa signature: his laugh.

- "There are some schools that teach that you do three 'ho, ho, hos' and then you're done. That is not correct. Nobody laughs three times. It's however long that laugh is," said Andrews.



Participant Doug Bell during a Santa School session in Calgary Saturday. LARRY MACDOUGAL/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Neil Young to play for group fighting oilsands

An aboriginal group opposing oilsands development in its traditional Alberta territory will get a boost this January from Canadian music legend Neil Young.

Young, along with Canadian jazz pianist Diana Krall, will play a benefit concert at Toronto's Massey Hall on Jan. 12, followed by shows in Winnipeg, Regina and Calgary under the banner Honor the Treaties. Tickets go on sale Tuesday, Dec. 10.

Proceeds from the concert series will go to the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (ACFN) legal defence fund, set up to support the band's legal challenges against oil companies and the government, who they say obstruct their traditional lands and rights.

"The ACFN have a multi-pronged strategy to challenge the status quo of development," spokeswoman Eriel Deranger said.

"But we're not anti-development; we are anti-adverse devastating development,"

Neil Young
THE CANADIAN PRESS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

she said, detailing a handful of initiatives that target both businesses and the provincial and federal governments — including filing a lawsuit against Shell Oil.

Deranger said the ACFN met with Young earlier this year, and he was taken aback by how much they were doing — and how much it must cost.

"Probably at this point (we've) spent between 3 and 4 million," Deranger said. "Lawyers aren't cheap."

For his part, Young has been an outspoken critic of oilsands development, even comparing the northern Alberta city of Fort McMurray with Hiroshima after the atomic bomb.

Deranger said 100 per cent of the shows' proceeds will go toward the fund.

On Friday, the federal government announced Shell's Athabasca Jackpine mine expansion could go ahead. The approval came before the ACFN had a chance to make concerns to Ottawa known, as part of a 35-day delay.

The project's review panel concluded it would create irreversible, but justified, environmental damage. Shell has purchased about 730 hectares of former cattle pasture to help compensate for the 8,500 hectares of wetland that will be lost due to the expansion.

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THE FINAL SHOWDOWN

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From left: Mac Arthur Mti wears badges for sale with the image of late president Nelson Mandela in Johannesburg, South Africa, remember you"; a girl looks at a performer during an event to pay tribute to Mandela. MUHAMMED MUHEISEN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

South Africa for Mandela

In mourning. World leaders to eulogize anti-apartheid icon

South Africa prepared Monday for a massive memorial in a soccer stadium honouring Nelson Mandela, where an eclectic mix of world leaders will eulogize the anti-apartheid icon before a crowd of nearly 100,000 mourners.

As a prelude to the stadium event, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and retired Archbishop Desmond Tutu spoke at an event at the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory Monday night.

"What a fantastic gift God gave to us in this Mandela, who quickly became an icon, a global icon of forgiveness, of generosity of spirit," Tutu said.

At the Soweto stadium where Mandela made his last public appearance at the 2010 World Cup, workers busily constructed a stage protected by bulletproof glass for Tuesday's memorial.

Nearly 100 heads of state are expected at the 95,000-capacity FNB Stadium, where some mourners are already camped out to be the first ones inside.

A program released by the South African government showed U.S. President Barack Obama would speak, as would UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Chinese Vice-President Li Yuanchao. South African President Jacob Zuma will give the keynote address.

Mandela died Thursday at age 95. After the stadium memorial on Tuesday, Mandela's body will lie in state at the Union Buildings, the seat of government in South Africa's capital, Pretoria, from Wednesday to Friday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canadian delegation arrives

Workers rush to prepare for memorial

Clouds hung over Johannesburg as a Canadian delegation arrived Monday to be part of the massive outpouring of grief and celebration following the death of Nelson Mandela.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper smiled and waved to a small gathering of South African and Canadian diplomatic officials as he stepped out of his plane onto a tarmac at Air Force Base Waterkloof, north of the city itself.

As the Canadian delegation made their way into the city, crews were still constructing the stage that will form the centre of what is expected to be a huge memorial for Mandela on Tuesday.

The Canadians flew for 18 hours to witness a country both suffering the pain of losing a world-renowned leader and swelling with the pride of having had him as president.

Harper will be joined at the memorial by former prime ministers Brian Mulroney, Jean Chrétien, Joe Clark and Kim Campbell.

"He had a wonderful sense of humour and the most magnificent smile," Mulroney said as he recalled many private meetings with Mandela.

In the 1980s, Mulroney made Canada a key player in the struggle against the apartheid regime that had imprisoned Mandela for 27 years.

Chrétien followed up years later when his Liberal government made Mandela an honorary Canadian citizen, a symbol of Canada's respect for the man that still holds today.

Following the memorial in Johannesburg, the delegation will join a procession Wednesday in Pretoria, where Mandela's body lies in state. THE CANADIAN PRESS

on Monday; soldier Lunga Mbatha writes a message for Mandela reading "rest in peace Tata (father) we will always love and

gets ready memorial

Security still a concern

Police promised "thousands" of officers would secure the stadium for Tuesday's memorial, though security appeared lax Monday.

- Officers will direct traffic, protect mourners and help the bodyguards of visiting dignitaries, Lt. Gen. Solomon Makgale, a spokesman for the South African Police Service, said Monday.
- "Whether we have 10 heads of state coming or 70 or 100, we do have the capacity and plans in place to facilitate their movement," Makgale said
- Makgale said a joint task-force of police, diplomats and intelligence service personnel have been making plans and talking to the foreign delegations who plan to attend the ceremony.
- Authorities expect overflow crowds to watch the event at nearby stadiums as well, saying they'd shut off access if the crowds grow too large.
- Meanwhile, a private security firm called Sidas Security was still hiring guards for Tuesday's event on Monday, using a compact car as an office. Sidas manager George Mathabe said the company will have 1,500 guards on duty Tuesday.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper speaks with former prime ministers Brian Mulroney, left, Kim Campbell and Jean Chrétien on board a government plane travelling to South Africa on Sunday. Harper and the former prime ministers plan to attend the memorial for Nelson Mandela. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Spy agencies kept eye on gamers: NSA leaks

Reports. Documents leaked by Edward Snowden reveal U.S., U.K. monitored online games

Gamers play a game on the Xbox One console during the Electronics Expo 2013 in June in Los Angeles. New reports reveal American and British intelligence operations were spying on gamers. KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

American and British intelligence operations have been spying on gamers across the world, media outlets reported, saying that the world's most powerful espionage agencies sent undercover agents into virtual universes to monitor activity in online fantasy games such as World of Warcraft.

Stories carried Monday by The New York Times, the Guardian, and ProPublica said U.S. and U.K. spies have spent years trawling online games for terrorists or informants. The stories, based on documents leaked by former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden, offer an unusual take on America's world-spanning surveillance campaign, suggesting that even the fantasy worlds popular with children, teens, and escapists of all ages aren't beyond the attention of the NSA and its British counterpart, GCHQ.

Spy agencies have long worried that such games serve as a good cover for terrorists or other evildoers who could use in-game messaging systems to swap info. In one of the documents cited, the NSA warned the games could give intelligence targets a place to "hide in plain sight."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Open letter to Obama

Major tech companies, stung by revelations that the U.S. government collects people's personal data on their networks, issued an open letter to President Barack Obama.

- As part of a global campaign to reform data collection, Google, Facebook, Apple and others said concerns over national security should be weighed against individual rights.
- "The balance in many countries has tipped too far in favour of the state and away from the rights of the individual — rights that are enshrined in our Constitution," the letter said. "This undermines the freedoms we all cherish. It's time for a change."

Selfie simulacrum. British art student creates scanned 3D self

Whether in a revolution, crime scene or dinner party, the selfie — Oxford Dictionary's word of the year — is an essential souvenir. British art student Lorna Barnshaw has taken the craze a step further with her 'Replicants' project, capturing herself with the most advanced scanners and 3D printing herself in full size.

I read that you wanted to recreate reality. How close did you come?

Not very close, because the scanners create glitches, so this is more about showing where the technology is at the moment. I tried to step back and let the machines do the work but they struggled at times and couldn't get the back of the head right.

I tried all the available options but you can't recreate natural lighting so the face appears lifeless and cold. With photos you can see emotion in a real-life environment. In a way this is what happens to us as we adapt and integrate with technology.

What does this say about human immersion in technology?

It's very strong and you can see that already with printed body parts and the augmented reality we can access. It's both exciting and scary, because technology has glitches. We are always trying to perfect it, but never satisfied.

Does the selfie craze prove we are all hopeless narcissists now?

It's about documentation of everything in life and gives you the appearance of control in it. We can create mirrors wherever we go.

What might you do with your replicant?

I'm sure it would make a good alibi. METRO WORLD NEWS

Stuck in the mirror stage?

Selfies are "about documentation of everything in life and gives you the appearance of control in it. We can create mirrors wherever we go."

British art student Lorna Barnshaw

Lorna Barnshaw's 3D selfie. COURTESY LORNA BARNSHAW

Hockey beats Crackgate

Leafs bodycheck Rob Ford off top of Facebook list

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford made headlines around the world but his antics didn't top Facebook Canada's list of the year's top topics. The Toronto Maple Leafs generated the most chatter, followed by the Harlem Shake dance craze, Miley Cyrus's infamous twerk, the Boston Marathon bombing and Ford, who came in fifth.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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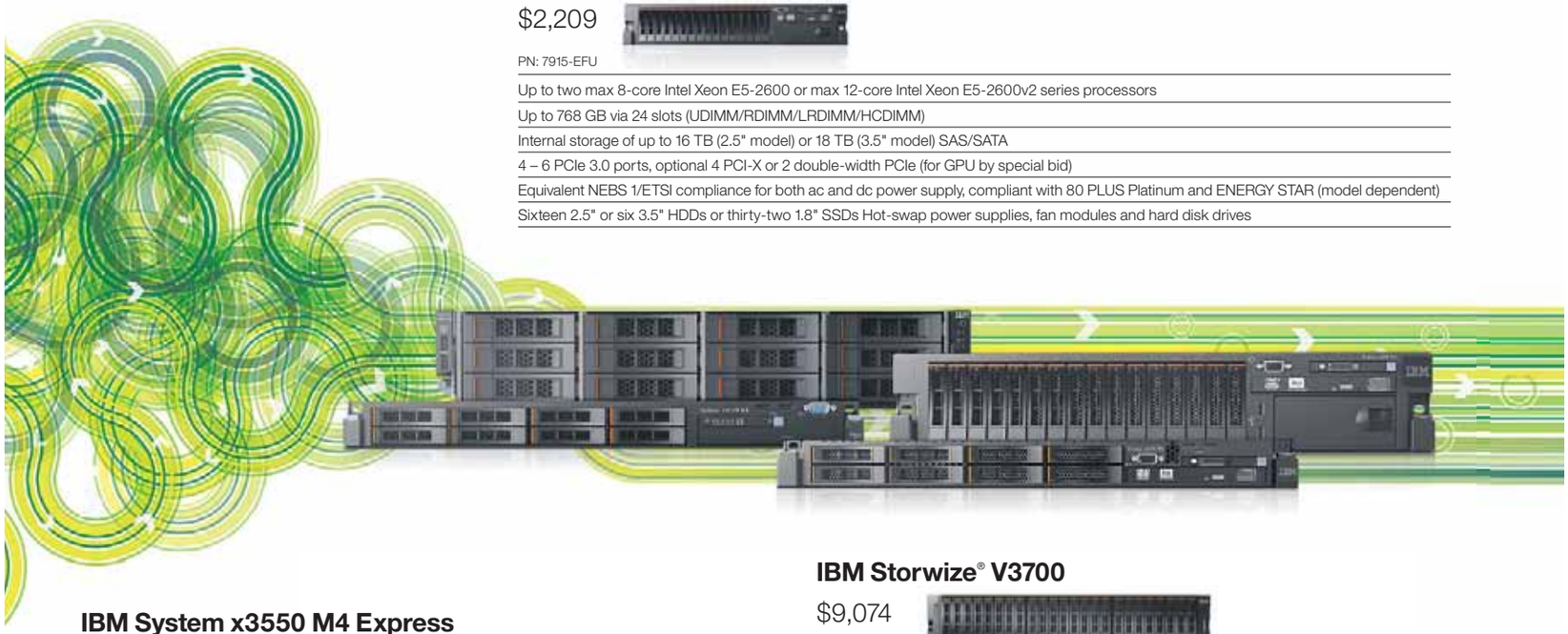

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CAN WE DROP THE REAL WOMAN CLICHÉ?

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

Last week a stranger asked me if I was expecting; I am not even remotely pregnant, although perhaps this is a sign I should lay off the boxes of holiday chocolates.

It was a harmless mistake I suppose — I think I was resting my hand on my stomach in a suggestive manner — but the incident did get me thinking about our willingness to comment so freely on other people's bodies, despite how inappropriate it might seem.

Bodies, especially female ones, are constantly in the public discourse. Fitness blogger Maria Kang (a.k.a. Fit Mom) caused quite a stir recently after posting a photo on her Facebook page in which she is flaunting her toned abs while surrounded by her three children and posing the question, "What's your excuse?"

Kang's narcissism and her finger-pointing at mothers who might try to justify a few pounds of leftover baby weight clearly didn't sit well with many individuals. And her follow up 'Sorry, I'm not sorry' faux-apologies didn't win her any fans either.

Last week, Kang wrote a piece for Time magazine denouncing what she refers to as "the fat acceptance movement" and arguing that "fit women are real women, too." While her self-righteous, fat-shaming irks me, it's her usage of the "real women" cliché that really gets under my skin.

I am a real woman. I eat a salad every single day for lunch and work out on a regular basis. I also really enjoy pizza and doughnuts. I don't believe in Kate Moss' motto that "nothing tastes as good as skinny feels" because hip bones are never going to be as important to me as artisanal cheeses. But that's just me.

Kate Moss is also a "real" woman and yes, so is Maria Kang — although it's worth noting these particular women often have a little help from Photoshop in their public photos. It's problematic to suggest that some women are more authentic than others.

Not all "real women" have curves and yet we can't seem to escape these sorts of absolutist expressions. Leggy, six-feet-tall supermodels with high cheekbones are still actual human beings — no matter how genetically impossible they might seem.

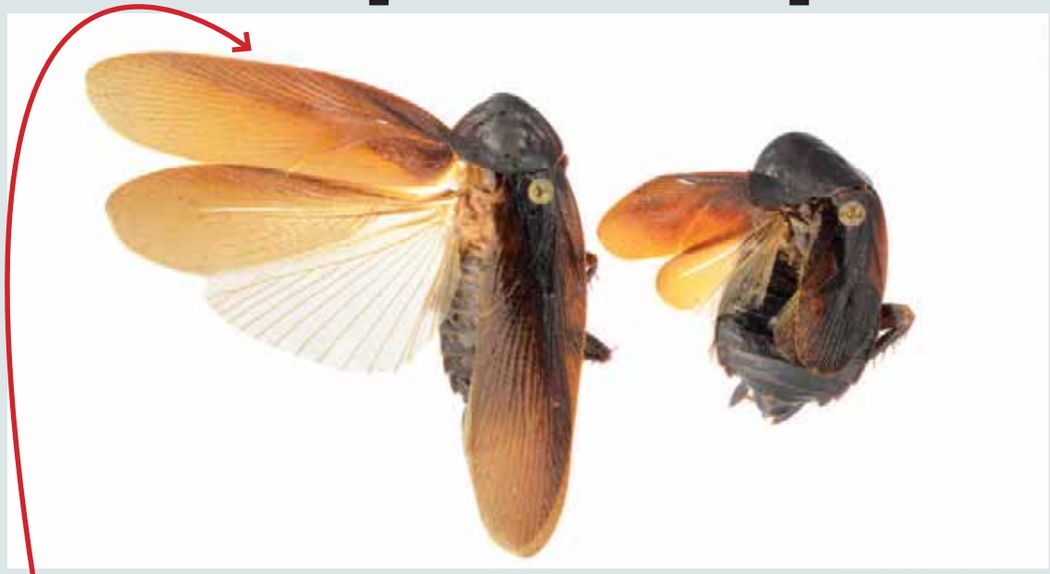
Some people applaud initiatives such as Dove's Real Beauty campaign that try and put "normal" women front and centre in the media, but I have a hard time getting on board with it. Of course I want to see a variety of bodies in mainstream advertising, but labelling them as "real" is just patronizing. Dove might be lauded for their efforts to include a diversity of models in their ads, but the message still elevates appearance over all other human qualities — which is probably understandable since at the end of the day they're still hawking body wash.

I'd love it if we could all stop using the "real women" cliché whenever we talk about bodies that deviate even slightly from the North American beauty ideal. All women, no matter their shape or BMI, are in fact "real" unless they come with a portable inflation pump.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

Cockroach species turns up in NYC



UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Invasive insect can withstand winter

The High Line, a park that turned a dilapidated stretch of elevated railway on Manhattan's West Side into one of New York's newest tourist attractions, may have brought a different kind of visitor: A cockroach (pictured) that can withstand harsh, cold winter and has never been seen before in the U.S.

Rutgers University insect biologists Jessica Ware and Dominic Evangelista said the species Periplaneta japonica is well documented in Asia but was never confirmed in the U.S. until now. The scientists, whose findings were published in the Journal of Economic Entomology, say it is too soon to predict the impact but that there is probably little cause for concern.

The newcomer was first spotted in New York in 2012, by an exterminator.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Critter versus critter

"Because this species is very similar to cockroach species that already exist in the urban environment, they likely will compete with each other for space and for food."

Dominic Evangelista, Rutgers University insect biologist
Competition will likely keep the population low, because more time and energy spent competing means less time and energy to devote to reproduction.

No super species hybrid

- The scientists suspect the critter was likely a stowaway in the soil of ornamental plants used to adorn the park.
- The likelihood that the new species will mate with the locals is slim, Evangelista says because "The male and female genitalia fit together like a lock and key, and that differs by species."

Clickbait

HANNAH ZITNER
hannah.zitner@metronews.ca

With Kickstarter and Indiegogo leading the way helping thousands of cash-strapped projects get off the ground, it's easy for niche projects to go unnoticed.

ISTOCK IMAGES

Not to worry entrepreneurial musicians, gamers and business-folk. You too can get your piece of the pie — you just have to know where to look.

Gambitious:
With pages and pages of gaming projects (video, board, cards, you name it) on mainstream crowdfunding sites, it didn't take a genius to see where the coveted crowd cash lies. Gambitious unites game developers, investors and players to make these games happen.

Rock The Post:
Hobby projects need not apply. Rock The Post's niche is revenue-generating business and rejects about 90 per cent of applicants. So, if you just want a bit of cash so you can take your band and hit the road, this might not be for you (but there's hope, keep reading).

GigFunder:
Didn't get that artists' grant? GigFunder tries to help touring musicians fund their road trips. (Warning: Haven't seen too many successful campaigns to date.)

Twitter

@metropicks asked: Tamagotchi, a 90s electronic pet, will come back in 2014. What other toys should — or shouldn't — return?

@ColinHFX: MOON. SHOES.

@nicoleblancPR: SkipIts! Those things are a hazard!

@strangerob: I pity the store clerks who will have to deal with these damn things & the angry parents.

@turdwrastler: bring back lawn darts

@_J_T_V_: THE JOCK JAMS CD SERIES

@ArCowx: I still have mine!

@SmashSays: @VivienLily Should I preorder you one? Haha

@QRefProblems: Fraggles

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Union Pearson Express Electrification Environmental Assessment

Transit Project Assessment Study and Class Environmental Assessment Study

NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT

Metrolinx is proposing to electrify the Union Pearson (UP) Express route beginning at the future UP Express Union Station in the City of Toronto and terminating at the future UP Express Pearson Station (Terminal 1, Toronto Pearson International Airport) in the City of Mississauga. The project involves the electrification of approximately 25 kilometres of track along the Union Station GO Rail Corridor and Kitchener GO Rail Corridor to Highway 427, where the route then follows the new UP Express spur line (under construction) into Toronto Pearson (see map below). The purpose of the project is to convert the UP Express route from diesel to electric power.

Electrification of the UP Express is part of *The Big Move*, Metrolinx's regional transportation plan which will dramatically improve how people move in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton areas. Funding for the electrification is dependent on the Metrolinx Investment Strategy.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) PROCESS

Metrolinx and Hydro One are carrying out a parallel EA process to satisfy both Metrolinx's requirements under the *Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP)* and Hydro One's requirements under the *Class EA for Minor Transmission Facilities (Class EA)*. The parallel EA process involves both EAs being completed simultaneously. The Environmental Project/ Study Report will be made available for public review and comment.

THE PROJECT

Electrification of the UP Express route will be achieved through a Traction Electrification System which will provide electricity to the trains by means of a **Traction Power Distribution System (Metrolinx)** and **Traction Power Supply System (Hydro One)**.

TRACTION POWER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

The proposed Traction Power Distribution System is an Overhead Contact System (OCS) comprised of a wiring system providing power to the trains. The wiring system will be suspended from a number of OCS structures (i.e. portals, cantilevers) placed along and over the track. The Traction Power Distribution System also includes two Paralleling Stations (PS) to boost the voltage along the UP Express route, as well as gantries which provide power to the OCS, and are located in the vicinity of each PS. A new electrified maintenance facility will need to be built to carry out maintenance on the new electric trains.

The environmental impact of the Traction Power Distribution System components and electrified maintenance facility is being assessed under the **Transit Project Assessment Process, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 231/08 – Transit Projects and Metrolinx Undertakings**.

TRACTION POWER SUPPLY SYSTEM

Electrification of the UP Express requires a connection to Ontario's electrical system. It is proposed that the power be supplied from the existing 230 kilovolt (kV) transmission line that runs between Hydro One's Claireville Transformer Station (located near Highway 407 and Highway 27 in the City of Vaughan) and Richview Transformer Station (located near Highway 401 and Highway 27 in the City of Toronto). Cables will deliver power to a new 230 kV Traction Power Substation (TPS). The TPS will convert the voltage from 230 kV, to 25 kV so that it can be used to power the electric trains.

The Traction Power Supply system is subject to provincial *Environmental Assessment Act* approval in accordance with the **Class EA for Minor Transmission Facilities**.

CONSULTATION

Members of the public, agencies and other interested parties are encouraged to participate in the EA process by attending consultation opportunities or contacting the project team directly with information, comments or questions. Consultation opportunities are planned and will be advertised on the project websites, in local newspapers and via direct mail. A second round of joint Public Open Houses are planned for winter 2014 to present and seek feedback on both the *TPAP* (Metrolinx) and *Class EA* (Hydro One) project components.

Consultation with the public, review agencies and First Nations and Métis communities is a key component to the UP Express Electrification EA. If you would like to submit a comment or question, or receive additional information related to the UP Express Electrification Project, please send an email to the project team at: **electrification@metrolinx.com** or contact:

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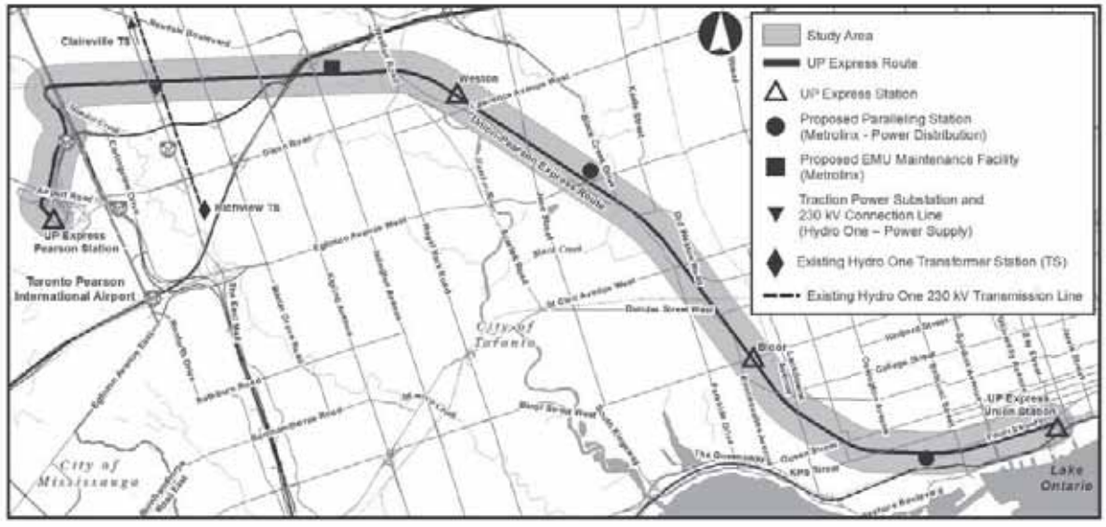
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DVD review

Fast & Furious 6

Director. Justin Lin

Stars. Vin Diesel, Paul Walker, Dwayne Johnson

●●●○○

The recent tragic car crash death of Paul Walker makes Fast & Furious 6 the last possible film with one of its original main co-stars. It's one of the better sequels — meaning action-packed — of this 12-year-old franchise. Directed once again by a steadily improving Justin Lin (he also helmed chapters 3, 4 and 5), the film reunites the ol' gang of hot wheelers just when they think they've made it to early retirement. Walker's Brian O'Conner and Vin Diesel's Dominic Toretto are obliged to put down their pina coladas and rev their engines for a predictably ridiculous story about stopping a badass band of mercenary drivers. Joining the fray are Dwayne Johnson, Michelle Rodriguez, Jordana Brewster, Tyrese Gibson, Sung Kang and Chris "Ludacris" Bridges, plus new faces Gina Carano and Luke Evans. Will you believe that a sports car can speed out of a crashing cargo jet? No, but it's fun to watch, although you may get misty-eyed over the scenes involving Walker. Extras included: deleted scenes, an extended version of the film, a director's commentary and making-of featurettes.

PETER HOWELL

Sounds for the season

If you've been to the mall recently, you know it's beginning to sound a lot like Christmas. We understand if you've hit Jingle Bell Rock-bottom, but if you haven't, here are some festive sound suggestions.

PAT HEALY
Metro World News in Boston

Wrapped in Red: Kelly Clarkson

Listening to the first three songs on Kelly Clarkson's new holiday release is a lot like getting a detailed Christmas card from a good friend who you haven't thought of in a while. It's one part "Oh, hey, so that's what you've been up to" and one part "Oh, right, this is why I like you!" But if you keep listening it's a little bit like hanging out with that old friend for a long weekend. You get traces of "Oh yeah, that's what kinda always bugged me about you." Yes, her voice is every bit as remarkable as it was when she won the first American Idol. The highlight may actually be an original song, Winter Dreams (Brandon's Song), which she wrote for her husband.

A Mary Christmas: Mary J. Blige

Upon first glance, this album looks like such a no-brainer that you wonder why this didn't happen way sooner. Mary's soulful voice and that punny title are holiday gold, right? Not quite. Mary does sound great, but pianist and producer David Foster — best known for creating the Celine Dion sound and the Josh Groban sound — gives the whole collection too much of the Celine Dion sound and the Josh Groban sound. Maybe this compilation really should have happened sooner, and without David Foster.

Duck the Halls: The Robertsons

My initial reaction to any musical output from the family behind Duck Dynasty is one of "who let this happen?" But the weird thing is, it's actually pretty good. Kicking off with Ragin' Cajun Redneck Christmas, a song that Willie Robertson actually co-wrote, is a rootin' tootin' good time. Sure, they have plenty of hired hands from the country music genre helping out, but this is a fun album. Sadie and Uncle Si can't really sing and there are lyrics like "We bought every string of lights Walmart had" and "Like Jesus and Santa Claus, we've got love behind these beards" (in the same song!), but it's full of goofy cheer for anybody who always wanted to hear a follow-up single to Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer.

Psych-Out Christmas: Various Artists

The album cover features Santa with a spliff in his mouth, so it's no stretch to say this 17-song compilation is a real trip. It's contemporary psychedelic indie acts like Psychic Ills and Quintron and Miss Pussycat alongside veterans like Iggy Pop, providing mostly sincere — if not a little hazy — takes on holiday classics. Sleepy Sun's re-imagining of What Child is This? is so epic you'll feel as high as the star (or angel) atop your tree and want to see the figurines of the nativity set rocking out to it.

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Gravity shared the best picture award with Her at the Los Angeles Film Critics Association awards Sunday. CONTRIBUTED

The vote is split on 2013's best flick

Anyone's awards. There was no critic consensus in L.A. this weekend, making Oscar predictions tough

The Los Angeles Film Critics Association split between the space odyssey Gravity and the futuristic romance Her, lending no more certainty to an awards season that's so far been full of contenders.

The two films shared best picture in the awards announced Sunday by the L.A. critics, but Gravity was the top award-winner. The innovatively made, lost-in-space drama won for best director (Alfonso Cuaron), best editing (Cuaron and Mark Sanger) and best cinematography (Emmanuel Lubezki).

Her, which is about a man (Joaquin Phoenix) who falls in love with his computer operating system (voiced by Scarlet Johansson), also won for K.K. Barrett's sleek, near-future production design. But the critics otherwise spread its honours around.

Dual winners were the theme. Best actress was shared by Cate Blanchett for her fallen socialite in Woody Allen's Blue Jasmine, and Adele Exarchopoulos for the lesbian coming-of-age tale Blue Is the Warmest Color. (The later film also won for best foreign language film.)

Best supporting actor was also a two-fer, with the group jointly honouring Jared Leto's performance as an HIV-positive transsexual in Dallas Buyers Club and, more surprisingly, James Franco's performance as the cornrowed gangster Alien in Spring Breakers.

Best actor went to Bruce Dern for his performance in Alexander Payne's father-son road trip Nebraska.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hard to predict

Early movie awards can help sort out the Academy Awards race, but they've been particularly varied this year. Last week the New York Film Critics Circle named American Hustle best film. The National Board of Review picked Her and the Gotham Awards elected Inside W Davis.

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Emma Thompson on the cusp of crotchety

Saving Mr. Banks.
Actress puts an interesting twist on a character that could have fallen to stereotype

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Just before our chat with Saving Mr. Banks star Emma Thompson, the British actress had wowed a press conference audience with a rather athletic entrance, vaulting herself over the dais — legs lifting high over the table — to get to her seat. The display was a far cry from P.L. Travers, her terse on-screen alter ego in Banks. But then there's a lot Thompson and Travers don't have in common.

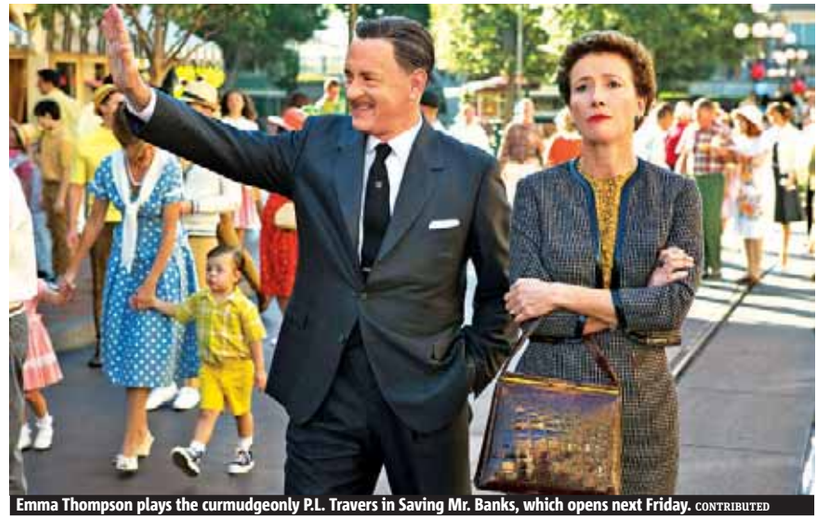
I wanted to commend you on a fantastic entrance to the press conference.
Essentially what you have to understand is that spiritually I always carry a bladder on a stick and wear a cap and bells. I must, I think, in a past life been some sort of court jester. Because I seem to make it my aim in life to get a laugh. Any way you can.

And may I say, you're quite limber. I don't know that I could've managed that.
You can always go down and have a go later.

I found it a bit distracting in this film that you're far too young for the part.
Well, I'm not far too young. I'm 54 and she was 66 at the time. I also think I look very old — suitably and properly old. Travers herself liked to divide a woman's life into three main parts: nymph, mother and crone. So I said, "Why don't we just play her on that cusp between mother and crone?" There's still a kind of Eros, an erotic possibility for her, but you can see that it's never going to happen because she's too closed up. I think that's more interesting because you can see the possibility there, and you're not playing a crotchety old lady — who is rather more easy, because of the way that our world works, to dismiss.

What are your thoughts on that simplified trio of life stages?
I kind of like it. I think it's interesting, you know, with the seven ages of man being another format, if you like, for thinking about the stages of our lives. And I personally think everything is always happening at once, if you see what I mean. I think that we carry it with us all the time, so you don't necessarily leave anything behind. It's all coming with you.

You've mentioned a problem with trying to find heroic historical female characters to look to. How do we fix that?
There are many things you can do. There's two questions: What is heroism? Is it action? Does it have to be action-based? As I started to [work] in cinema I realized that I would identify with Marlon Brando because he was the one getting to do things and that women seemed to be the ones saying, "No, don't do that brave thing, stay here with me," I started to get very frustrated with that. And I remain frustrated with that because it's still a very common trope. I turned down role after role after role in my 30s which were the wife going, "No please! Why don't you think of us? Think of the children!" That sort of milksop, marshmallow-y stuff that wasn't even allowed to be inhabited in any real way. But the problem with female heroism is not one that's very easy to answer because if the actions are going to be the same as the male hero, then what do you do? You stick a gun in their hands. What's the point of that? It's the same old, same old. It's a real conundrum.



Emma Thompson plays the curmudgeonly P.L. Travers in Saving Mr. Banks, which opens next Friday. CONTRIBUTED

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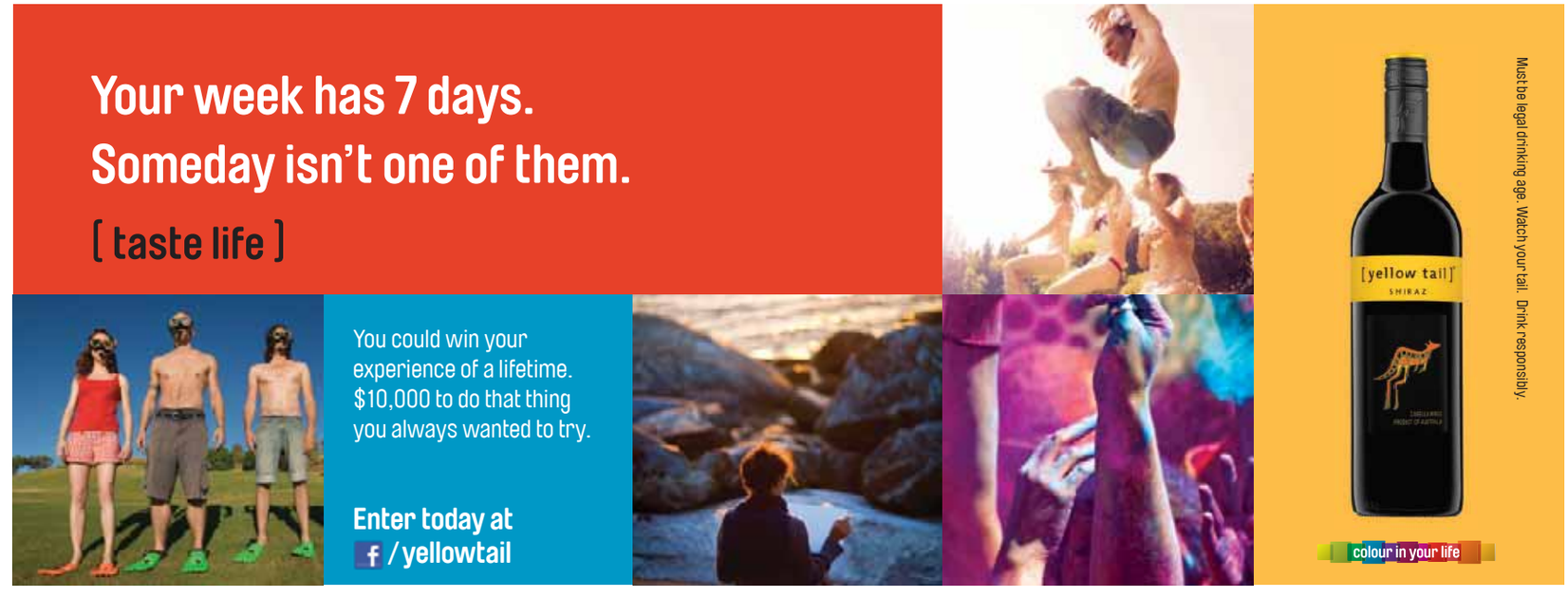
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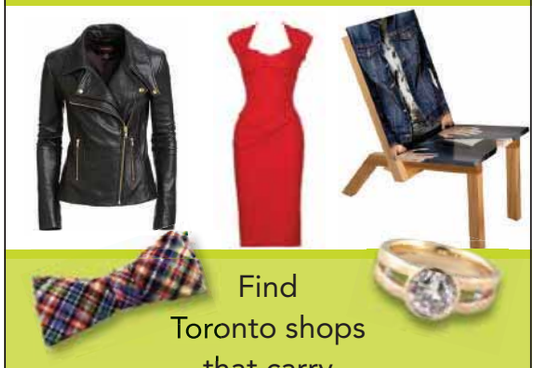

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TORONTO

Best Secret Santa reads

Don't know what to bring to the office holiday gift swap this year? Here are the books we think are least likely to be re-gifted.

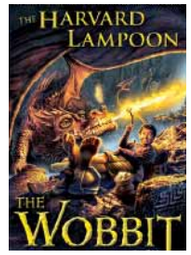
EMILY LAURENCE/METRO WORLD NEWS IN NEW YORK CITY

Beatles vs. Stones by John McMillian

Impress a music lover by gifting this entertaining read about the Beatles vs. Stones rivalry. Their competition wasn't just something that people suddenly started debating at bars: McMillian explains how it was created by record execs and marketing teams. The Beatles were portrayed as lovey dovey guys who wanted to hold your hand while the Rolling Stones were portrayed as the sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll bad boys. This gift is sure to spark some fun holiday party convos.

The Wobbit by The Harvard Lampoon

Any Tolkien fan or excited Hobbit movie-goer will appreciate this book, which was written by the folks at The Harvard Lampoon — also the authors of The Hunger Pains and Bored of the Rings. The Wobbit follows Aaron Sorkinshield and his army of Little People on a journey across Widdle Wearth to steal back their Academy Awards, which were stolen by Puff the Magic Dragon. Instead of encountering trolls, wobbit Billy Bagboy faces Internet trolls along with moblins and spiders.



White Whine : A Study of First-World Problems by Streeter Seidell

For your friend who can't get enough of #whitegirlproblems or #firstworldproblems, look no further than collegehumor.com's new book, White Whine. Chapters explore agonizing hardships such as choosing the wrong line at Whole Foods or when feathers start poking you through your pillow. Everyone at your Secret Santa party will love passing around this book, commiserating, rolling their eyes and laughing along.

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Kanye West ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

All quiet on the West front: Kanye wants you to know his tour is war zone-tough

Kanye West isn't sure everyone appreciates how dangerous his current tour is. "Like, I'm just giving off my body on the stage. I'm putting my life at risk, literally," West says in an interview with SaturdayNightOnline.com, citing some of the precarious set pieces involved in the live show. "And I think about it. I think about my family and I'm like, wow, this is like being a police officer or something, in a war or something. Like you're literally going out to do your job every day, knowing that something could happen. Something can happen to you."

Spears thinks Chaotic was a crappy decision, but don't you dare diss Crossroads

Regrets? Britney Spears has a few. Her biggest, apparently, was documenting her relationship with ex-husband Kevin Federline on the short-lived 2005 reality series Britney and Kevin: Chaotic. Spears admits the show was a mistake. "I would never do something like that again," she tells the Telegraph. "Actually, that was really bad. That was probably the worst thing I've done in my career." But she doesn't feel the same way about her big-screen debut, 2002's Crossroads. Asked if she's embarrassed about it, Spears shouts back, "No! I like Crossroads! F— you!"

The Word

Could Miley be the Person of the Year?

PAT HEALY
Metro World News

Time magazine's managing editor Nancy Gibbs announced the shortlist for Person of the Year on the Today show yesterday and one inclusion may surprise you: Miley Cyrus.

Yes, the person most famous for twerking all over our TV screens is in the running with President Obama, Pope Francis, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, Syria's President Bashar Assad, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius, Edward Snowden and gay rights activist Edith Windsor for the title.

"Power is not just political. It can be cultural, it can be spiritual. She came in like a wrecking ball, literally," Gibbs said, trying desperately to have this make sense.

"At a time when you're living with an explosion of exhibitionism since we all now carry cameras with us at all times, she is a symbol of the way we live."

Will you Mary-Kate me? Olsen may be on her way to the alter

Mary-Kate Olsen

Is Mary-Kate Olsen getting ready to welcome a partner into her voluminous circle scarves?

The actress/twin/fashion person, 27, has been dating Olivier Sarkozy, the 44-year-old brother of France's ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy, for more than a year. Despite the 17-year age difference, the two are reportedly getting quite serious.

According to Page Six, Mary-Kate was recently spotted perusing diamond engagement rings at the Neil Lane boutique in Los Angeles. Apparently, MK was drawn to platinum bands with large, cushion-cut gems, some as much as $100,000 — "I don't think price was an issue," a source said.

Well, obviously not. They are the very definition of a power couple. One of them is the scion of an immensely powerful global dynasty, and the other one is Olivier Sarkozy.

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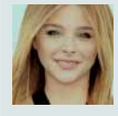

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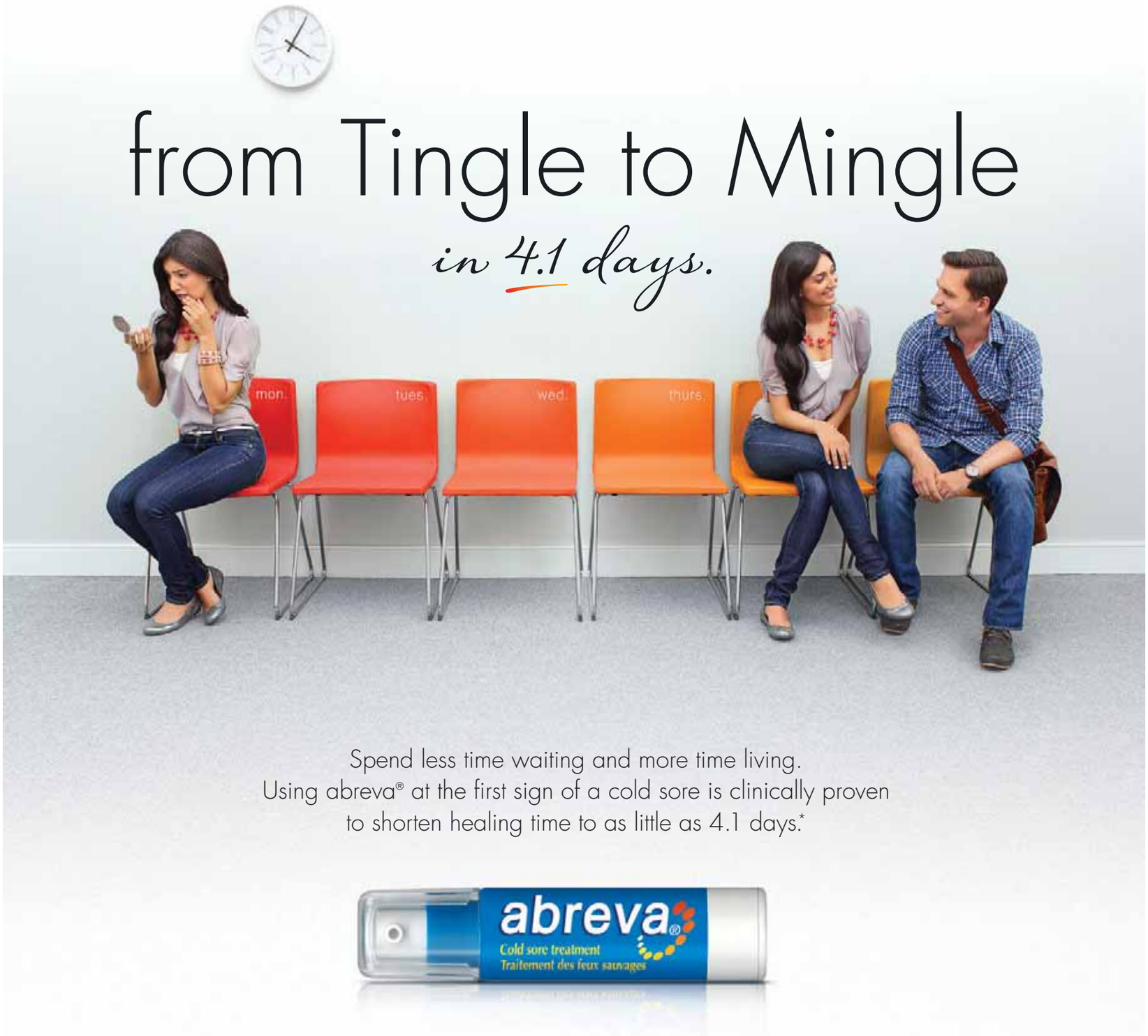
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Keeping pounds off with healthy holiday drinking

Sipping celebrations. The Food Babe weighs in on what to avoid when you're attending those multiple holiday shindigs

ANDREA PARK
Metro World News

Celebrate all you want — just do it responsibly. ISTOCK PHOTOS

Holiday parties are filled with good cheer, friends and of course, plenty of booze. Maybe you're looking for the cocktail or beer that will do the least damage to your body? Activist and blogger Vani Hari, also known as the Food Babe, talked to Metro about how to pick your poison during the holidays.

Beer

You'd be surprised by the "extras" some manufacturers add to your favorite beers. Hari called individual companies to ask for ingredient lists and found that some beers contain ingredients like corn syrup and caramel coloring. Caramel coloring is known to be carcinogenic. It contains a chemical called 4-methylimidazole, which has been linked to cancer in animals. Hari said beer manufacturers use caramel colouring to give the beers a "deep golden brown" colour that is typically achieved by using high quality hops. Newcastle is one brand that uses caramel coloring in its beers.

Hari said some of the mass-produced beers that have corn syrup in their ingredients list include Corona, Miller, Coors, Pabst Blue Ribbon and Red Stripe. Heineken, Amstel and Sierra Nevada are a few popular brands that do not use genetically modified ingredients or other unsavory additives.

Even so, Hari recommended seeking out beers from local microbreweries first.

"Those smaller breweries are generally not using the crazy additives that other companies use to save money or produce faster," she said.

Go easy

Of course, the healthiest way to go is to avoid drinking when possible.

- **A simple solution.** "You don't have to drink at every holiday party," said Hari. "If you have five parties in a week, don't feel like you have to drink at all of them. A club soda with lime on the rocks looks like a vodka tonic so you can blend in."

Wine

Not all wines are created equal. Hari said some wines are produced with poor quality grapes and can include preservatives, additives and sulfites. Sulfites have been linked with allergic reactions and asthma. Hari suggested buying organic wines, which eliminate exposure to pesticides and other additives.

She likes drinking biodynamic wines by Frey and Robert Sinskey. "They take it up another notch by making wines that are biodynamic," said Hari. "You're not just drinking organic wine, but wine that's also environmentally friendly."

Hard alcohol

Again, Hari urged consumers to buy organic hard alcohol, as it's impossible to simply check an ingredients label for additives. "You're also not going to have genetically engineered corn or soy in the organic versions of liquors," said Hari.

Hari said your best bet is to go for the simplest spirits — flavored ones may contain artificial or natural flavors that can include a range of substances, including castoreum, which is sometimes derived from beavers' anal glands.

Agave plants are not sprayed with pesticides as much as other plants, thus agave-derived liquors like 100 per cent agave tequila (Patron is one brand) are "very clean," according to Hari.

As far as navigating cocktails at holiday parties, Hari said it's best to go for unflavored mixers as well, like soda water or 100 per cent juices.

"Stay simple," she said. "Juice is way better for you than Pina Colada or Bloody Mary mix. The holidays are a time to have a good time and let loose, so just minimize the damage by trying to pick the best drinks."

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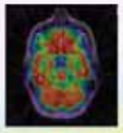

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Do you think you have seasonal affective disorder?

Bad in bed. It might have nothing to do with the changing of the seasons, you might just simply be sleep-deprived

Shake out the cobwebs with some simple changes. ISTOCK PHOTOS

LINDA CLARK
Metro World News

Are you feeling extra sleepy now that the days are short and the nights are long? Does a dark, cold afternoon make you want to curl up and snooze?

Well, it's not entirely due to the change in the seasons, according to Dr. Lawrence J. Epstein, an associate physician of sleep medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. He says it's more likely due to year-round sleep deprivation.

"Humans don't hibernate — if people feel like sleeping longer in the winter, it's likely due to sleep problems in general," says Epstein. "People are just not getting enough sleep. Over the past 50 to 75 years, our sleep has been decreasing. This is not good. It causes changes in the body's physiology. It's not healthy."

Inadequate sleep is associated with weight gain, changes in glucose metabolism leading to diabetes, hypertension and an increased risk of heart disease.

"People who have poor sleep don't live as long," says Epstein.

"You don't feel good. Cognitive function is impaired, reaction time is slower, attention decreases and judgment is impaired."

If you're feeling particularly grumpy or depressed — in addition to sleepy — this time of year, Epstein says those symptoms are more in line with seasonal affective disorder (also known by its appropriate acronym, SAD), but notes that "exposure to light usually fixes the problem."

Indeed, light exposure sets circadian rhythms (the body's internal clock), determining when we sleep.

That's why some people might sleep longer in winter, when there's less daylight, and that inclination for extra sleep can be a good opportunity to establish more restful long-term sleep habits.

"You can absolutely reset your sleeping pattern," says Epstein. "It can be very individual; not everyone sleeps at the same times and for the same amount of time."

He recommends testing out going to bed when you're sleepy and waking up when you want (if you're lucky!) to figure out what sleep schedule works best for you.

"Initially, you're making up for lost sleep, (but) in two weeks, you're waking up feeling refreshed and you've found your natural sleep period."

Sleep tips

Here are some tips to help establish and maintain your personal sleep pattern

- **Routine.** Go to bed at the same time and get up at the same time every night
- **Schedule.** Set aside enough time for sleep
- **Get ready.** Establish a relaxing pre-sleep routine
- **Do not touch.** Avoid alcohol and caffeine

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Bonnie Munday
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Best Health Magazine

In the latest issue of Best Health magazine, we rounded up some beautiful and practical gift ideas, all with a healthy twist. Pick up the issue to find a roundup of items that cover all four of our healthy pillars: Look Great, Get Healthy, Eat Well and Embrace Life.

But we also suggest gifts like donating your time and giving to a charitable organization. According to research from the University of Exeter Medical School in the U.K., volunteering can improve mental health and help you live longer.

Here are three charitable gift ideas.

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ISTOCK PHOTOS

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World Vision Christmas Ornament Set (Trio), $85. Give a holiday gift that supports African entrepreneurs. One ornament set includes an African water buffalo, a giraffe and an elephant, all made from wire and beads and handcrafted by Kenyan artisans who received a World Vision micro-loan to start their business. For more information, go to worldvision.ca/gifts.

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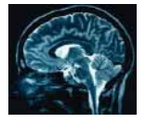

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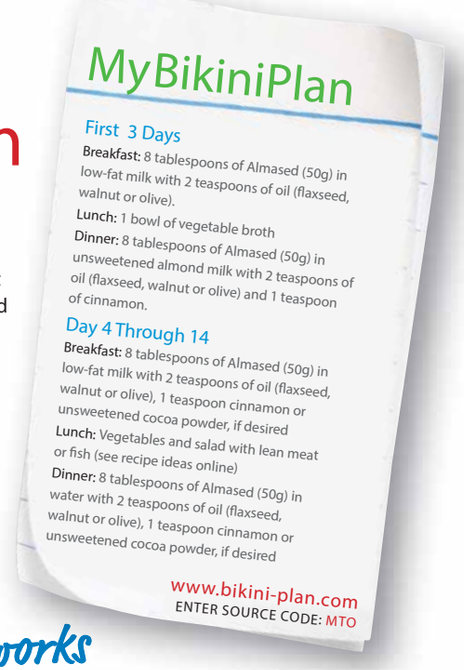
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Dreading those long hours at the mall? It's time to make shopping a teachable moment

Planning. If you let kids help with making lists and doing online research, they can learn lots about budgeting

YOUR MONEY
Alison Griffiths
money@metronews.ca

Talk about humbug! I've never heard so many parents grousing about the holiday season and especially about shopping.

I feel it's my duty to put the sparkle back in the spirit of the holidays. So, instead of dreading hours at the mall, enlist your little darlings to do as much as possible. Allowing them to take the holiday lead offers the best kind of financial literacy teachable moment.

Here's how to set off on the right (and least stressful) foot this season.

The list

Whether it is done via an app or on the back of an envelope, the list is the cornerstone of smart shopping. Children easily get distracted once in the stores; lists keep them focused. Younger children can dress up their lists with a photo of the desired gift next to the person's name. Don't hover, Mom and Dad! Help out with names for their list, then allow them to come up with ideas on their own.

Older kids can use one of the many apps available such as Gift List, My Christmas Shop and Christmas List. They are all well rated and suitable for adolescents through teens. Most keep a running spending total, which is a boon.

The budget

Like macaroni needs cheese, a list needs a budget. Just as children learn language through repetition and context, so they will come to understand they can afford a pair of argyle socks for Grandpa but not an argyle cashmere sweater.

Have older kids do some online price research and surf for coupons and deals. This is the kind of tech challenge most will enjoy.

Encourage homemade gifts for all ages. Again, let them do as much as possible. Kids are natural-born creators.

The shopping

One word — organization. There's still plenty of time. Take two or three shorter shopping trips rather than an all-day marathon. Match the amount spent with what is budgeted. Apps will help with this. Have kids ask for gift receipts, and remember not to micro-manage.

Give children financial responsibility and it won't take long before they help make holiday shopping a more pleasurable experience.

Children are easily distracted in stores, but lists can help keep them focused. ISTOCK

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Doubling the oats makes them breakfast food, right?

Many people would balk at the idea of eating holiday cookies for breakfast, but this recipe might make you reconsider.

These Double-the-Oats Oatmeal Cookies are so jammed with oats — making them tender and wonderfully chewy and rich — that eating them is like enjoying a morning bowl of oatmeal in the form of a cookie.

Feel free to substitute 1 1/2 cups of dark chocolate chips and 1 cup of chopped walnuts for the cherries and pecans.

This recipe makes three dozen cookies. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1. Heat the oven to 350 F. Line a baking sheet with kitchen parchment.

2. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs and vanilla until frothy. Add both sugars and the oil. Mix until well blended and creamy in appearance.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, cardamom and salt. Add to sugar and egg mixture and mix until completely combined. Mix in 2 cups of the oats, then the cherries and pecans. Add the remaining 1 1/2 cups of oats and mix well. The batter will be stiff.

4. Working in batches, use teaspoon to drop cookie dough on prepared sheet, leaving about 2 inches between cookies. Bake for 14 to 15 minutes, or until golden brown and still soft at the centre. Cool for 2 minutes on the baking sheet, then use a spatula to transfer to a rack to cool completely. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ ELIZABETH KARMEL, AUTHOR OF SOAKED, SLATHERED AND SEASONED.**

Ingredients

- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, sifted
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground cardamom
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3 1/2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats (not quick-cooking), divided
- 1 1/3 cups dried cherries
- 1 generous cup pecan halves, coarsely chopped

Health Solutions

Let the loafing begin

NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

It is loaf season!

And I do not mean the kind of loaf you do on the sofa. I mean the kind you bake a stack of, wrap up and take to every party as a hostess gift.

Banana loaf can be so ho hum but to add a little ho ho ho, think about stirring in one or some of these ingredients:

- Chopped Medjool dates
- Crushed candy canes
- Chocolate covered espresso beans (placed on top when loaf is half baked)
- Grated zucchini
- Chopped pieces of brie with grated apples
- Cocoa nibs
- Hemp seeds
- Pineapple chunks
- Hot peppers and lime juice (to make a more savoury loaf)

There is no reason the holidays have to be unhealthy or boring. Just a few simple jazzy bits can make all the difference.

Remember to wrap your loaf in plastic and tie it with a pretty ribbon. Everyone likes an edible gift (that they can re-gift and look like a star even though they didn't do a darned thing!).

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

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Funny moms take aim the festive 'break'

EMILY LAURENCE
Metro World News

If you find the term "winter break" ironic because your kids are driving you nuts and you still have a ton to do before the end of the year, laughter can only help. Metro rounded up some of social media's most popular moms and asked for their advice on how to survive the holiday season. Here's what they had to say:

"Holiday fashion tip for moms: If wearing a red velvet jacket, keep your white chin hairs plucked. Otherwise a kid might sit on your lap. #metromoms"
@WendiAarons

"It's usually best if you wrap the gifts before unwrapping the bottle. #metromoms"
@FunnyIsFamily

"Holiday tip #305: If you have toddlers, save time by breaking all your ornaments with a hammer before putting them on the tree."
@paigekellerman

"Forget the 'Elf on the Shelf:' I'm going full 'Blair Witch' on my kids and leaving them creepy little bundles of twigs in new spots every night."
@shriekhouse

"Pick a fight with some friends before the holidays. Fewer gifts to buy!"
@marinkanyc

Be prepared for the Xmas work party

Eat more, drink less. Gratitude, discipline, light flirting and being yourself is a great start but always remember it's not just some bar, it's your office

JULIA FURLAN
Metro World News

Sure, the halls are decked and there's an array of festive booze ready to be guzzled, but an office holiday party is a ruse. In fact, "office" matters a lot more than "party" in the grand significance of the event. If you're smart, you can make an office holiday party good for your career (and have a little fun, too).

Karen Elizaga is an executive coach and author of Find Your Sweet Spot: A Guide to Personal and Professional Excellence, and she says that it's important to walk into the holiday bonanza with a certain amount of decorum. "It's certainly a time to celebrate with your colleagues, but it's definitely not a time for payback," she advises. "I tend to think of these parties as a work event, so I go prepared."

Preparedness doesn't mean arriving with a Santa beer helmet or a naughty little elf outfit. A holiday party is an internal networking event, Elizaga says, so she recommends you walk in with a few topics of conversation prepared — and never on an empty stomach. "If you show up well-fed, the chances of you doing something crazy is much less. Watch your alcohol intake."

As the founder of the catering and event planning company Between the Bread, Ricky Eisen may have a different perspective from Elizaga, but her first piece of advice is the same: "Don't drink too much." She also says there's no classier move than for employees to thank the person who planned the party. And if the tinsel and holly aren't really your style, don't mention it, Eisen says. "Respect the effort of the person who put it together, whether or not it's the kind of party you would throw."

Both experts agree on one thing: It's about the people. "You want people to see your personality. It might not shine through (at work) when you're so focused and serious," Elizaga says. Most importantly, just because you're not shotgunning beers doesn't mean you can't revel in the festive spirit: "Make sure you have fun." she says. Here's some tips to use by the punch bowl ...

Enjoy! But avoid getting too drunk and making a scene. ISTOCK

Network
"An office party is such a great time to make those connections," Elizaga advises. "Somebody who works outside of your immediate vicinity or who you want to pay special gratitude to because they helped you get something done — it's a really great time to connect."

Be aware of monopolizing people's time
"There may be somebody you want to talk to because you think they can help you professionally, but understand that they want to talk to other people, too. Be cognizant of the time that you're taking," Elizaga reminds revelers.

Say thanks
"If you're attending, make sure you go over to the person who planned it and thank them. I think that goes a huge long way to showing that you have manners and proper etiquette," Eisen suggests.

You can flirt, cautiously
"I think it's perfectly acceptable to make a connection with somebody you've had your eye on at work. But be guided by what's appropriate. This is not some random bar or party you're at. This is your office," Elizaga says.

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TAKARA SMALL
Metro News in Toronto
@takarasmall

Who: Brydon Gilliss, co-founder of 20Skaters

What: An online application that allows hockey players to organize pickup games and avoid those pesky rink fees

Where: 20skaters.com

Why: "This is for people who want to hit the rink, who want to play, but just can't because they don't have the people and resources."

The mythos that the slow progression of technology is making us slower and fatter may just be all wrong.

Although smart phones and the endless possibilities they offer have the potential to make us less likely to move, let alone workout this slew of Canadian-made and -created apps and technology will show you how this holiday season you can keep those pounds off and get into shape all with the touch of your finger.

Brydon Gilliss is the co-founder of 20Skaters, and he's hoping that Canadians will look to him when lacing up their skates.

The technology entrepreneur is cofounder of an application that allows ardent hockey fans (and fanatics) across Canada to organize pickup games without the headache of chasing down players for money or finding free players during the busy holiday season and beyond. The best part? It's goon free, he says.

"It can be a thankless job to purchase icetime and organize pickup hockey for friends. We thought there must be a better way for organizers and players to make use of their rink time without losing money."

20Skaters isn't the only application this holiday season that Canadians can rely on to keep them in shape.

PumpUp, a free application created by University of Waterloo students was created in hopes of keeping Canadians who are too busy to hit the gym in shape with one touch of a button.

Phil Jacobson is cofounder of PumpUp, which is perfectly suited for the busy holiday period.

"Garrett [co-founder] was going to the gym and training his friend during his downtime, but started to plateau," says Jacobson. "He was looking for a routine that would fit his schedule and had variety."

The application uses an algorithm based on input from trainers and fitness instructors that personalizes fitness routines and goals to suit the individual.

"It's hard for customers to get to the gym, but we built a pop up gym that goes everywhere and can be used anywhere," he says.

Brydon Gilliss wants to make sure that Canadian hockey players don't lose out on valuable rink time. PROVIDED

E-laborate

- To see more Canadian-made or designed apps available to keep you healthy go to metronews.ca/mom-and-pop-shop

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Famously fabulous career advice

Metro's Dan Schawbel regularly interviews celebrities and ask them for career strategies that can benefit you. Here he's selected the best advice that will inspire you to take action and rethink how you manage your career.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Goldie Hawn

"Remember that your level of happiness is the most important thing you have to protect... I don't care whether the person next to you is making a million bucks and you're making way less. If you judge yourself by that person, you're not judging yourself by your intrinsic joy and what makes you feel happy."

Melissa Joan Hart

"You have to be willing to take rejection. You have to have a thick skin in order to make it in this business, or any entertainment industry really. You have to have a thick skin because you're going to get rejected more times than you get rewarded."

Piers Morgan

"If you make a big mistake, admit it immediately, and apologize sincerely. There's never any upside in continuing to resist this course of action despite all the evidence to the contrary. Or, as an old editor once told me: 'If you're in the s—, get out of it a million miles an hour!'"

Malcolm Gladwell

"We learn more from compensating for our weaknesses than capitalizing on our strengths. It's your weaknesses that define who you are and how you learn, and force you to do creative things. It's making sense and working your way around your weaknesses that [you] succeed."

Rachael Ray

"It's important that you understand that goals should never be money, or fame, or a television show. A goal has to be something that's more about your message as a contributor. What are you offering people with your job? That's a tough thing for people to understand sometimes."

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"I don't plan on being extremely emotional, but I don't know.... I guess I don't rule it out." **Former Flames captain Jarome Iginla,** who plays his first game in Calgary as a Boston Bruin on Tuesday since being traded last spring.

NHL

Knee lands Neal five-game ban

The NHL has suspended Pittsburgh Penguins forward James Neal for five games for kneeing Boston forward Brad Marchand in the head. The incident occurred in the first period of Boston's 3-2 home win over Pittsburgh on Saturday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Penguins' James Neal knees Brad Marchand on Saturday in Boston. GETTY IMAGES

Baseball Hall of Fame

Managing legends Cooperstown bound

Joe Torre, Tony La Russa and Bobby Cox, baseball's winningest managers over the past four decades, were unanimously elected to the Hall of Fame on Monday by the expansion era committee.

Each won more than 2,000 games and was selected on all 16 ballots when the committee met Sunday ahead of baseball's winter meetings.

"Managing against them, you certainly learned things," said Torre, now an executive vice-president for Major League Baseball. "I am honoured to go into the Hall with these two guys."

Induction ceremonies will be held July 27 in Cooperstown, N.Y.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Doc decides to ride off into sunset a Blue Jay

MLB. Toronto great tips hat to club that drafted him in official retirement announcement

In the end, Roy Halladay went back to his major-league roots.

Halladay signed a one-day contract with the Toronto Blue Jays on Monday that allows the veteran right-hander to retire as a member of the team with which he broke into the majors and spent the bulk of his distinguished 16-year career.

Halladay made the announcement at a news conference in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., site of the baseball meetings.

"As most people know, I was very lucky to have a lot of people in the organization really develop and help me become the player I was able to become," Halladay said.

"It really turned my career around and it made a big difference in my career and that's why I'm very fortunate to retire as a Blue Jay."

Halladay spent his final four major-league seasons with the Philadelphia Phillies and also went to great lengths to express his gratitude to that organization and its fans.

Halladay was drafted 17th overall by Toronto in 1995 and made his major-league debut three years later as a September call-up.

His first game was unremarkable. In five-innings against Tampa Bay, he gave up three runs and a homer in a 7-5 win. A week later, Halladay went the distance against Detroit. His stat line reads like what Toronto fans would come to expect: Nine innings, eight strikeouts, no walks and just a run allowed in a 2-1 win.

The dominant starter, however, wouldn't emerge until after several ugly seasons. A serviceable season in '99 led to a disastrous 2000 when he finished with a 10.64 ERA.

That was the turning point. Instead of giving up on Halladay, Toronto sent him to single-A Dunedin in '01 to rebuild his mechanics. He was promoted through double- and triple-A until returning to the Blue Jays on July 2.

His first game back was ugly — six runs allowed in two-plus innings of relief against Boston. But Toronto kept him in the majors and he started every game the rest of the season, finishing with a complete-game shutout against Cleveland for a respectable 3.16 ERA.

Halladay never looked back. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Two-time Cy Young award winner Roy Halladay announces his retirement after 16 seasons in the major leagues on Monday at the baseball winter meetings in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. JOHN RAOUX/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Halladay's Jays numbers

148

Roy Halladay's 148 wins as a Blue Jay sit second behind Dave Stieb.

ERA

3.43

Third in Jays history, just barely behind Stieb and Jimmy Key (tied at 3.42).

Innings pitched

2046.2

Third, behind Stieb and Jim Clancy

Strikeouts

1,495

Second, behind Stieb

WHIP

1.20

Tied for first with Key

Complete games

67

Third, behind Stieb and Clancy

Wins above replacement

51.9

First among all Jays, per Fangraphs.com.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cornish never banked on Lou Marsh honour

2013 Lou Marsh award winner Jon Cornish THE CANADIAN PRESS

No one was more surprised by Jon Cornish capturing the 2013 Lou Marsh award as Canada's top athlete than the Calgary Stampeders running back himself.

Cornish narrowly defeated Milos Raonic, the first Canadian men's singles tennis player to achieve a top-10 world ranking, and Kaillie Humphries, who dominated the women's bobsled circuit this season, for the honour.

"I really didn't know anything was going on, I was just getting ready to go for a day of work," said Cornish, employed as a bank rep in Calgary during the off-season. "But then (Stampeders communications director) Jean Lefebvre called and informed me that I had been selected.... This was a nice little addition to my day."

And in a truly CFL moment, the 29-year-old Cornish spoke to reporters during a conference call while on a break at the bank Monday.

Cornish became just the third Canadian to win the CFL's outstanding player award after rushing for a 1,813 yards.

The native of New Westminster, B.C., also led the league with 2,157 yards from scrimmage and 14 TDs en route to being named the CFL's top Canadian.

He's the first Canadian to win the CFL's top player award since Ottawa Rough Riders tight end Tony Gabriel in 1978 and the first CFL player to claim the Lou Marsh since legendary Ottawa QB Russ Jackson in 1969. THE CANADIAN PRESS

‘It just wasn’t working’: Ujiri

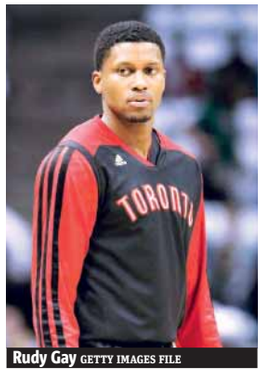
NBA. Raptors GM cites spacing, conflicting skill sets as reasons Gay was odd man out

Rudy Gay and the Toronto Raptors just didn’t work out, according to team general manager Masai Ujiri.

Ujiri said he didn’t have a problem with Gay’s talent level or attitude. But he said that the Raptors were lacking in chemistry, and changes had to come.

So Ujiri pulled off his second major trade since joining the Raptors in the off-season, sending Gay and his sizable contract to the Sacramento Kings.

“Phenomenal talented player, it just wasn’t working,” Ujiri said at a press conference Monday.


Rudy Gay GETTY IMAGES FILE

Ujiri said there were issues with spacing on the floor, and also acknowledged the suggestions that Gay and guard DeMar DeRozan did many of the same things on the court.

The seven-player deal also sees centre Aaron Gray and forward Quincy Acy head to the Kings.

The Raptors receive guards John Salmons and Greivis Vasquez, forward Patrick Patterson and centre Chuck Hayes in return.

Gay averaged 19.4 points per game, 7.4 rebounds and 2.2 assists for the Raptors this season.

The player who should make the biggest impact on the Raptors coming the other way is likely Vasquez. The six-foot-six, 211-pound guard is known as a decent ball distributor, which should help a team ranked dead last in the league in assists.

Vasquez has averaged 9.8 points, 1.9 rebounds, 5.3 assists and 25.8 minutes in 18 games with the Kings this season.

The team also announced Monday that it has waived back-up point guard D.J. Augustin. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Boston	30	20	8	2	84	61	42
Montreal	31	19	9	3	85	65	41
Detroit	31	15	9	7	85	82	37
Tampa Bay	29	17	10	2	80	70	36
Toronto	31	16	12	3	86	87	35
Ottawa	30	11	14	5	86	99	27
Florida	31	9	17	5	70	104	23
Buffalo	30	6	22	2	51	91	14

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	32	21	10	1	98	71	43
Washington	30	16	12	2	92	85	34
Carolina	30	13	12	5	71	84	31
NY Rangers	31	15	15	1	69	80	31
New Jersey	31	12	13	6	69	77	30
Philadelphia	29	13	14	2	64	73	28
Columbus	30	12	15	3	73	82	27
NY Islanders	30	8	17	5	75	104	21

Monday’s results
Pittsburgh 2 Columbus 1
Philadelphia at Ottawa
NY Islanders at Anaheim
Carolina at Vancouver
Sunday’s results
Minnesota 3 San Jose 1
Chicago 6 Florida 2
Boston 5 Toronto 2
Washington 4 NY Rangers 1
Vancouver 3 Colorado 1
Tuesday’s games
All Times Eastern
Los Angeles at Montreal, 7 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Washington, 7 p.m.
Ottawa at Buffalo, 7 p.m.
New Jersey at Columbus, 7 p.m.
Nashville at NY Rangers, 7:30 p.m.
Detroit at Florida, 7:30 p.m.
St. Louis at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.
Chicago at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
Phoenix at Colorado, 9 p.m.
Boston at Calgary, 9:30 p.m.
Carolina at Edmonton, 9:30 p.m.
NY Islanders at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.
Wednesday’s games
Los Angeles at Toronto, 7:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Minnesota at Anaheim, 10 p.m.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	32	21	6	5	116	89	47
St. Louis	28	19	6	3	98	66	41
Minnesota	32	18	9	5	77	75	41
Colorado	28	20	8	0	82	65	40
Dallas	28	14	9	5	81	80	33
Winnipeg	31	14	13	4	82	88	32
Nashville	30	13	14	3	67	88	29

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Anaheim	32	20	7	5	101	84	45
San Jose	30	19	6	5	101	75	43
Los Angeles	30	19	7	4	79	62	42
Vancouver	32	17	10	5	86	81	39
Phoenix	29	16	8	5	94	93	37
Calgary	29	11	14	4	78	98	26
Edmonton	31	10	18	3	84	105	23

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss.
Thursday’s games
Montreal at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Columbus at NY Rangers, 7 p.m.
Buffalo at Ottawa, 7:30 p.m.
Detroit at Tampa Bay, 7:30 p.m.
Toronto at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Dallas at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Colorado at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.
Carolina at Calgary, 9 p.m.
NY Islanders at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Boston at Edmonton, 9:30 p.m.
Minnesota at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.

NFL

Monday’s result
Dallas at Chicago
Sunday’s results
Kansas City 45 Washington 10
Baltimore 29 Minnesota 26
Tampa Bay 27 Buffalo 6
N.Y. Jets 37 Oakland 27
Miami 34 Pittsburgh 28
New England 27 Cleveland 26
Cincinnati 42 Indianapolis 28
Green Bay 22 Atlanta 21
Philadelphia 34 Detroit 20
Denver 51 Tennessee 28
San Diego 37 N.Y. Giants 14
San Francisco 19 Seattle 17
Arizona 30 St. Louis 10
New Orleans 31 Carolina 13

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Indiana	18	3	.857	—
d-Miami	16	5	.762	2
Atlanta	11	10	.524	7
d-Boston	10	12	.455	8½
Detroit	10	11	.476	8
Charlotte	10	11	.476	8
Washington	9	11	.450	8½
Chicago	8	10	.444	8½
Toronto	7	12	.368	10
Cleveland	7	13	.350	10½
Philadelphia	7	15	.318	11½
Orlando	6	14	.300	11½
Brooklyn	6	14	.300	11½
New York	5	14	.263	12
Milwaukee	4	16	.200	13½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Portland	17	4	.810	—
Oklahoma City	15	4	.789	1
d-San Antonio	15	4	.789	1
d-L.A. Clippers	14	8	.636	3½
Houston	15	7	.682	2½
Denver	13	8	.619	4
Dallas	13	8	.619	4
Phoenix	11	9	.550	5½
Golden State	12	10	.545	5½
L.A. Lakers	10	10	.500	6½
New Orleans	9	10	.474	7
Memphis	9	10	.474	7
Minnesota	9	11	.450	7½
Sacramento	5	13	.278	10½
Utah	4	18	.182	13½

x - clinched playoff berth; **y** - division; **z** - conference.

Monday’s results
L.A. Clippers 94 Philadelphia 83
Charlotte 115 Golden State 111
Denver 75 Washington 74
Orlando at Memphis
Portland at Utah
Dallas at Sacramento
Sunday’s results
Boston 114 New York 73
Miami 110 Detroit 95
Houston 98 Orlando 88
Oklahoma City 118 Indiana 94
Toronto 106 L.A. Lakers 94
Tuesday, December 10
San Antonio at Toronto, 7 p.m.
New York at Cleveland, 7 p.m.
Miami at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Minnesota at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Oklahoma City at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Boston at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
Milwaukee at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Phoenix at L.A. Lakers, 10:30 p.m.

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The Raptors' roster revamp

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE
Photos by Torstar News Service

Coming and going

In trading away Rudy Gay to the Sacramento Kings, Raptors general manager Masai Ujiri has found a taker for his most expensive player and obtained significant salary and roster flexibility.

Gay had nearly $38 million US left on his contract.

Also shipped to Sacramento were Aaron Gray and Quincy Acy.

Coming to the Raptors are guard Greivis Vasquez, swingman John Salmons and forwards Patrick Patterson and Chuck Hayes, though the roster will likely remain unsettled for some time yet.

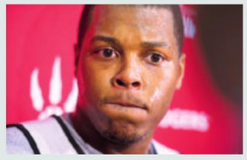
Likely to stay

Jonas Valanciunas, who is ever-willing to learn, also plays hard. That's not easy to find in big guys.

DeMar DeRozan will play more of a substantial role with Gay's departure. Critics had said that their skills duplicated each other on the court. The fifth-year swingman is in the first year of a four-year, $38-million contract. He has been the best and most consistent Raptor all season.

DeRozan has been frustrated by the Raptors' play of late, and now will have a chance to see if his passion can turn this thing around now and in the future.

Likely to be traded



Kyle Lowry is the player most likely to be traded next. He's got an expiring contract some teams would want, and now the Raptors have a point guard in Vasquez who could take his minutes.

Under NBA rules, the newly acquired Vasquez, Salmons, Patterson and Hayes can all be dealt again in a multi-player transaction, but not until just before the February trade deadline.

Two players who may have some value on the trade market are Terrence Ross and Amir Johnson.

Tuesday, December 10, 2013

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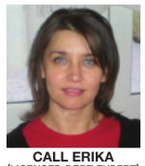

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Avoid wishful thinking today. Cosmic activity in areas of your chart that deal with self-deception could lead to silly mistakes. Reality is what it is. There is no need to embellish it or wish it were something different.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Be careful what you say if someone asks for advice. Make sure what you tell them comes from your experience and is not something you picked up from an unreliable source.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You seem to be getting through a lot of work, which is good. But you won't be able to keep up this pace. Think of ways you can ease back a little. You need to stay sharp, both mentally and physically.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You don't lack for confidence or ideas but there is a danger today that you could mislead yourself about the true state of your affairs. Think positive by all means but don't let wishful thinking take a hold on you.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Sit down and have a heart-to-heart talk with someone you care for. A lot has been said and done in recent days, and the time has come to clear the air. Be honest about your feelings.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You are in a carefree mood and should cheer up loved ones who do not share your happy-go-lucky outlook. You can't change the world but you can make people smile.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Can you trust your senses? Most of the time. But today you would be wise to question what your eyes and ears tell you. Are you seeing and hearing what's really there?

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Start something new. Yes, you have failed to follow through so many times in the past but this time will be different. What happened to all those big ideas you had? They're still there.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Your mind may be bubbling with a dozen great ideas but if you try to follow them all, you will get nowhere fast. Decide what is the one aim that means the most to you then put your heart and soul into it.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Make sure you deal only with people who are original today. Some of their ideas may be a little way out for your more traditional tastes but no matter, they will encourage you to try a few creative tricks of your own.

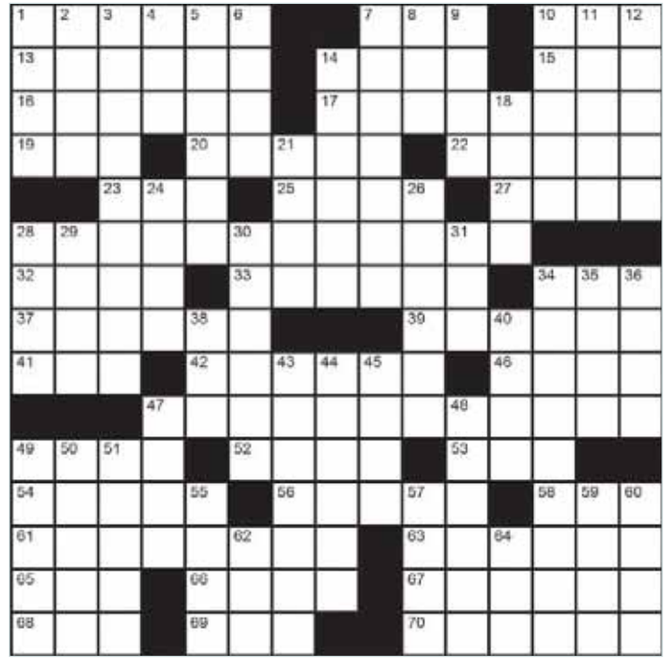
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Bring your plans up to date. Sit down with a pen and paper, and write down your top three objectives. Then map out how you are going to get from where you are now to where you want to be.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
If you are thinking of taking a trip, that's good, but keep your plans flexible. Last minute changes are more likely than not over the next 24 hours, so be prepared. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



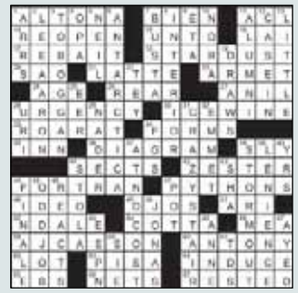
Across

1. Return to a place: 2 wds.
7. Wildebeest
10. Ferrell's festive flick
13. "The Middle" star Patricia
14. Pictured
15. Ms. Leoni
16. Use sticky stuff then decide to peel away from it
17. Valley on Vancouver Island; also, a beautiful sweater from there
19. Crop
20. Persist
22. An 'it'
23. Here: French
25. Associations [abbr.]
27. Pretends
28. Lake Manicouagan in Quebec is ring-shaped because it's a what from 215 million years ago?: 2 wds.
32. Car's need
33. Canadian author Mr. Choy
34. "__, _ don't." (Retort to "Yes, you do.")
37. "The ___ Know" by Collective Soul
39. Nice
41. Nav. designation
42. "Clever fellow!": 2 wds.
46. Has to pay
47. Leader of the Green Party of Canada: 2 wds.
49. Gumbo ingredient
52. Pre-midnight, __ _'clock
53. One: Spanish
54. De-crease
56. Repenters
58. Tea, in Tadoussac
61. English folklore hero: 2 wds.
63. Old Testament's Book of __
65. Disney deer
66. Latin hymn: "Dies __"
67. Aviators
68. Actor Mr. Shepard
69. No __ intended
70. __ identity

Down

1. Ra's al __ (Batman foe)
2. Prefix meaning 'Wine'
3. Kilt-wearing musicians
4. Nfld's ocean
5. Daytime talk host Katie
6. Human 'cap' site
7. Hannah __, Canadian singer
8. __ and improved
9. Division
10. Moral principle
11. Resembled the Tower of Pisa
12. Dracula costume must-haves
14. Move along quickly
18. Overdo, as steak
21. __-Cola
24. Ring up
26. Stuff with food
28. "Don't mind __ __ do." (That'd be great for us)
29. Subatomic particle
30. Dusky
31. WSW opposite
34. Mary, on December 25th, way back when: 2 wds.
35. Vitamins brand, __ _ Day
36. __-bitsy
38. Internet hookup letters
40. Mindy of "The Facts of Life"
43. Canada's men's Olympic hockey team GM, Steve __
44. "The Blue __" by Johann Strauss
45. Hautbois
47. Direction
48. Scrap
49. Chose
50. Sweden's money
51. House-selling company
55. Boat
57. Sporty whistle blowers
59. Present
60. Once, poetically
62. South American country, for short
64. __-Tac-Toe

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Yesterday's Sudoku

6	4	8	2	9	3	1	7	5
1	5	2	4	7	6	9	3	8
3	9	7	5	1	8	2	4	6
9	8	3	1	6	4	7	5	2
5	1	4	7	2	9	8	6	3
7	2	6	3	8	5	4	9	1
4	6	9	8	3	1	5	2	7
2	3	1	9	5	7	6	8	4
8	7	5	6	4	2	3	1	9

8						5	1	
1				9	4		7	
	9							
			3		8	4		
	5	3	6		7	1	8	
		6	9		2			
							5	
	6		8	3				1
	4	2						3

Today
-6°/-9°
Variable

Wednesday
-5°/-9°
Variable

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